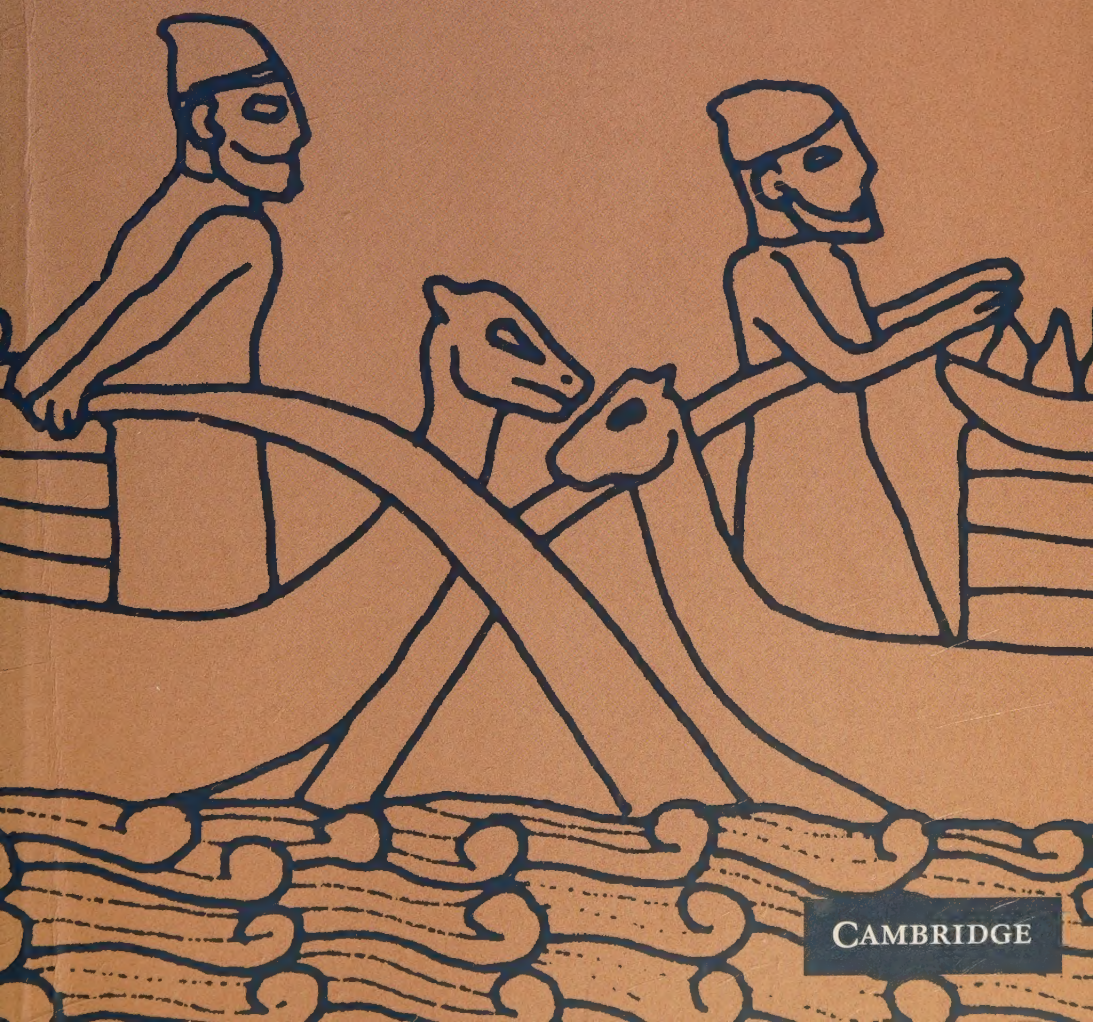
The Phoenicians and the West

Politics, Colonies, and Trade

Second Edition

Maria Eugenia Aubet



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THE PHOENICIANS AND THE WEST

Politics, Colonies and Trade

SECOND EDITION

This is an updated and expanded version of Maria Eugenia Aubet's highly praised book, *The Phoenicians and the West*, first published in English in 1996.

Between the ninth and sixth centuries BC, the Phoenicians established the first trading system to encompass the entire length of the Mediterranean basin, from their homeland, in what is now Lebanon, to colonies in Cyprus, Tunisia, Sicily, Sardinia and southern Spain. The Phoenician state was able to maintain its independence, despite the territorial expansion of the Assyrians, in return for tribute provided by its western colonies. Archaeological research over the past decades has changed our understanding of these colonies and their relationship to local Iron Age communities.

The revised version incorporates the most recent research findings, includes an expanded bibliography, a new Prologue, and an Appendix on radiometric dating. As the only original synthesis of archaeological and historical data on the Phoenicians in English, it will interest not only Mediterranean historians and archaeologists, but also scholars studying the trade systems of state and non-state societies.

MARIA EUGENIA AUBET is Professor in the Department of Archaeology, Universidad Pompeu Fabra. Her other publications include *Tartessos* (1990) and *Les Orants de Carthage* (1974).

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THE PHOENICIANS AND THE WEST

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SECOND EDITION

MARIA EUGENIA AUBET
Universidad Pompeu Fabra

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH BY
MARY TURTON

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Contents

	List of figures	*page* vi
	List of tables	xi
	Preface	xiii
	Introduction	1
1	Who were the Phoenicians?	6
2	Phoenicia during the Iron Age	26
3	The bases for the expansion in the Mediterranean	70
4	Phoenician trade: exchange mechanisms and organization	97
5	The great political institutions: the palace and the temple	144
6	The routes of Phoenician expansion in the Mediterranean	159
7	The Phoenicians in the west: chronology and historiography	194
8	The Phoenician colonies in the central Mediterranean	212
9	The colonies of the far west	257
10	The colonies in the west	305
11	Concluding thoughts	347
	Appendices	
I	The journey of Wen-Amon to Phoenicia	356
II	Oracles against Tyre	363
III	Radiometric datings	372
	Bibliography	382
	Index	426

Figures

1	The Near East	*page* 8
2	The eastern Mediterranean	14
3	Phoenicia	15
4	Entrance gate to the temple of Baalat-Gebal in Byblos (*c.* 2800 BC)	20
5	The Temple of the Obelisks in Byblos (*c.* 1900–1550 BC)	21
6	Gate to the city of Ugarit	22
7	View of the excavations at Ebla (photo M. Paz Ortuño)	24
8	Plan of Tyre. The Tanit symbol marks the site of the ancient necropolis (after Seeden, 1991)	32
9	Aerial view of Tyre in 1935 (after Poidebard, 1939)	33
10	Aerial view of Tyre in 1938 (after Jidejian, 1960)	34
11	Southern Phoenicia and the territory of Tyre	36
12	The island of Tyre: bronze bas-relief from the gates of Balawat (ninth century BC) (after E. Gubel (ed.), *Les Phéniciens et le monde méditerranéen*, Brussels, 1986, fig. 13)	37
13	Phoenician ships; in the background the islands of Tyre and Arvad. Bas-relief at the palace of Sargon II in Khorsabad (eighth century BC)	38
14	Flight of king Luli of Tyre. Assyrian bas-relief from Khorsabad, early seventh century BC (after R. D. Barnett, 'Phoenicia and the ivory trade', *Archaeology* 9:2, 1956, 87–97)	39
15	Pottery from Tyre, eighth century BC (after Bikai, 1978)	40
16	Roadway from the Roman period in Tyre, near the Romano-Byzantine necropolis	42
17	Eighth-century cinerary urn from the necropolis in Tyre (after Seeden, 1991)	42
18	Phoenician ivory from the royal palace of Samaria (eighth century BC)	48

19	Israelite amphorae from Tyre (after Geva, 1982)	49
20	Aerial view of the temple of Astarte at Kition	53
21	The Assyrian campaigns in the Near East	58
22	Phoenician amphorae from Tell Arqa and an inscription painted on one of them (after Thalman, 1978)	62
23	Pottery from the necropolis at Khaldé (after Saidah, 1996)	64
24	Hypogeum in the necropolis at Sidon (after Renan, 1864)	67
25	Variables of the Phoenician expansion to the west	73
26	The colonies of Tyre in the Bay of Haifa	78
27	Phoenicians bringing tribute to the king of Assyria. Bas-relief from the palace of Asurnasirpal II in Nimrud (859–839 BC) (after R. D. Barnett, 'Illustrations of Old Testament history', The British Museum, London, 1966)	91
28	Phoenician ship. Bas-relief from the palace of Sennacherib in Nineveh (*c.* 700 BC)	115
29	Main products of exchange in Tyrian trade in Ezekiel (after Liverani, 1988)	124
30	Extent of Tyrian trade in the Near East after the text of Ezekiel	125
31	Phoenician silver bowl from Idalion, Cyprus (eighth century BC) (after Rathje, 1980)	131
32	Phoenician silver bowl from Praeneste, Italy (seventh century BC) (after Poulsen, 1912)	136
33	Winged sphinx or cherubim in a Phoenician ivory from the Nimrud palace (after Barnett, 1982)	150
34	Phoenician expansion into the Mediterranean	160
35	Limits from which land can be seen in the Mediterranean (after Schüle, 1968)	169
36	Aerial view of Sidon in 1934 (after Poidebard, 1939)	179
37	Aerial view of Carthage (after Poidebard, 1939)	180
38	Marine currents in the western Mediterranean (after Ruiz de Arbulo, 1983)	183
39	Prevailing winds in the western Mediterranean (after Ruiz de Arbulo, 1983)	184
40	Shipping routes in the Mediterranean	188
41	East–west routes in the western Mediterranean (after Ruiz de Arbulo, 1983)	189
42	West–east routes in the western Mediterranean (after Ruiz de Arbulo, 1980)	190
43	Bronze statuette of the so-called 'Reshef' from Selinunte (after Tusa, 1973)	202

44 Bronze statuettes found in the sea at Huelva (after Gamer-Wallert, 1982) 203
45 The Nora stele 207
46 The Phoenician colonies of the central Mediterranean 213
47 Ancient levels of the eighth to seventh centuries BC at Carthage (after Rakob, 1989) 220
48 Plan of Carthage (after Rakob, 1984) 221
49 Euboean pottery from Carthage (after Vegas, 1992) 222
50 Alabaster urn from the necropolis of Junon, Carthage (seventh century BC) 223
51 Early Phoenician pottery from Carthage 224
52 Pottery from the deposit in the *tophet* at Carthage (after Cintas, 1950) 225
53 Plan of the island of Motya 232
54 The Phoenician colonies in Sardinia 236
55 View of the Phoenician colony of Bithia and its bay 237
56 Plans of Tharros, Nora, Sulcis and Bithia 238
57 Early pottery from the *tophet* at Sulcis (after Bartoloni, 1983) 239
58 Pottery from the Cronicario at Sulcis (after Bernardini, 1993) 240
59 The acropolis of Monte Sirai 241
60 The *tophet* at Sulcis 251
61 The *tophet* of Salammbô, Carthage 251
62 Phoenician colonies and indigenous settlements in the south of Spain 258
63 The bay of Cadiz today and three alternative models for the reconstruction of the ancient archipelago 263–266
64 Aerial view of Cadiz 267
65 Reconstruction of the island of Cadiz and position of the principal archaeological remains (after Escacena, 1985) 268
66 Proto-Aeolian capital from Cadiz (photo Instituto Arqueológico Alemán, Madrid) 269
67 Bronze statuettes from the bay of Cadiz (after Perdigones, 1991) 270–271
68 Minero-metallurgical sites on the lower Guadalquivir (after Ruiz Mata, 1979) 272
69 View of the excavations at Castillo de Doña Blanca (photo Ruiz Mata) 273
70 Phoenician pottery from La Cruz del Negro, Carmona (seventh century BC) 274

71 Pot and mining tools from Rio Tinto (after Blanco, Luzón and Ruiz Mata, 1970) 282
72 Tartessian silver-smelting furnace in the calle del Puerto, Huelva (photo J. Fernández Jurado) 283
73 Bronze jug from the necropolis of La Joya, Huelva (photo J. P. Garrido) 286
74 Phoenician amphora from El Carambolo (seventh century BC) (after Carriazo, 1973) 288
75 Greek 'SOS'-type amphora from Cerro del Villar, Malaga (seventh century BC) 289
76 Astarte. Bronze statuette, El Carambolo (eighth century BC) (photo Museo Arqueológico, Seville) 290
77 South-central Portugal and Estremadura 293
78 Mouth of the bronze jug from Zarza de Alange (photo Badajoz Museum) 294
79 Bronze jug from Siruela (photo Badajoz Museum) 295
80 The Gaio Treasure at Sines (after García Bellido, 1970) 296
81 Phoenician pottery from Abul (after Mayet and Tavares da Silva, 1993) 298–299
82 View of the acropolis at Lixus 300
83 Phoenician pottery from Mogador (seventh century BC) (after Jodin, 1966) 303
84 The Phoenician colonies in eastern Andalusia and the Final Bronze Age indigenous settlements 306
85 Dwellings in the B1 Phoenician level at Morro de Mezquitilla (photo Instituto Arqueológico Alemán, Madrid) 308
86 Imported Phoenician pottery of the 'Samaria' type from Morro de Mezquitilla (after Maass-Lindemann, 1990) 309
87 Aerial view of Almuñécar (photo *Paisajes Españoles*) 311
88 The Phoenician colonies on the mouths of the Vélez and the Algarrobo and the corresponding necropolises 313
89 Plan of Toscanos (after Niemeyer, 1985) 318
90 View of the triangular pit and ashlar wall, Toscanos (photo Instituto Arqueológico Alemán, Madrid) 319
91 Plan of the warehouse at Toscanos (after Schubart and Niemeyer, 1972) 320
92 Red-slip pottery from Toscanos (eighth to seventh centuries BC) (after Schubart and Niemeyer, 1972) 322
93 Bronze thymiaterion from Cerro del Peñón (photo Malaga Museum) 323

94 Aerial view of the lower Guadalhorce (photo *Paisajes Españoles*) 324
95 Aerial view of the ancient island of Villar in the mouth of the Guadalhorce 325
96 Dwellings at Cerro del Villar (seventh century BC) 326
97 Grave goods from Tomb 20 at Almuñécar (seventh century BC) (after Pellicer, 1962, and Negueruela, 1985) 331
98 Alabaster urn from Tomb 3 in the 'Laurita' necropolis at Almuñécar (photo Museo Arqueológico, Granada) 332
99 Alabaster urn from Tomb 20 in the 'Laurita' necropolis at Almuñécar (photo Museo Arqueológico, Granada) 333
100 Tomb 1 at Trayamar (photo Instituto Arqueológico Alemán, Madrid) 334
101 Grave goods from Tomb 1 at Trayamar (seventh century BC) (after Schubart and Niemeyer, 1976) 335
102 Ibiza and the early settlements (after Costa and Fernández, 1993) 338
103 Southeastern Spain: indigenous settlements, Phoenician colonies and underwater finds 340
104 The Spanish Levant and northeast: indigenous settlements and Phoenician colonies 342
105 Phoenicio-Punic radiometric series from the Iberian Peninsula 380
106 Comparison between specific series of datings 381

Tables

1	Phoenician chronologies	*page* 19
2	Kings of Tyre, Assyria and Israel	56–57
3	Radiometric datings from the Iberian Peninsula from Phoenician colonization to the Punic period	374–377

Preface to the second edition

Generally speaking, historico-archaeological syntheses are of limited validity, especially in the case of disciplines like Phoenician archaeology, which have only been in existence for a few years and where much remains to be done. As far as the history of the Phoenician expansion in the Mediterranean is concerned, archaeological finds occur regularly every year, intensive work is being done in various spheres of historical investigation and we are beginning now to know the results of many years of scientific work in particular regions like Carthage, Andalusia and Ibiza. Moreover, with the end of the war in the Lebanon we can look forward to just as spectacular investigations and results in the territories from which the Phoenician diaspora originated, as have been achieved in recent years in the western Mediterranean. The expected incorporation of Lebanese archaeology into studies of the Phoenician question will undoubtedly allow the scientific balance to be redressed towards a more accurate understanding of the history of the Phoenicians in the Mediterranean; up to now, this has been only partial and largely restricted to the sphere of their overseas colonies.

In the years since the first edition of *The Phoenicians and the West* (1987), huge advances and new discoveries have been made in the sphere of research into the Phoenician world. Take, for example, the extraordinary debate that has gone on about the significance of the *tophet*, the discovery of ancient Carthage, the new finds in Sulcis, that have forced a re-examination of the chronological framework of Phoenician colonization in Sardinia, the notable new information about Phoenician trade in Atlantic waters supplied by Portuguese archaeology, and Tyre itself, where the Iron Age necropolis has at last been found.

Looking back over the years, we become more aware of certain errors in our approach to and interpretation of some of the data in the

archaeological record, and this has obliged me to modify positions and correct some criteria, accepting that our discipline can only move forward if we are constantly readjusting our theory and methodology in line with the archaeological evidence.

This necessary correction of some of our approaches and the incorporation of the most significant discoveries provided by historico-archaeological research in recent years are sufficient justification for this new edition of the book. Some chapters have been restructured, others have been left virtually as they were and some sections have been either expanded or eliminated, depending on the changes undergone by the text.

The chapters that have been subject to the most modifications are the following: chapter 2, to which recent discoveries in Lebanese archaeology have been added and in which the whole of the appendix concerning the archaeology of the Phoenician cities in the east, slightly expanded, has been incorporated; chapter 8, which includes new data about Carthage and Sulcis and in which the whole section on the *tophet* has been restructured; lastly, chapter 9 has been split in two, both parts practically rewritten from scratch, one devoted to Gadir and the Atlantic region and the other (chapter 10) given over to the Mediterranean colonies of the Iberian Peninsula. As to the bibliography, as in the first edition I have avoided as far as possible bibliographic references within the text and have opted, in this edition, to arrange the general bibliography at the end of the volume, divided according to themes within each chapter and containing the works we feel to be most relevant to an individual approach to each of the questions and topics contained in the volume.

Over the years, I have contracted an enormous debt of gratitude to individuals and institutions and I want to express my most sincere thanks in these lines. To those people who, thanks to their valuable hints and suggestions, made the first edition of the book possible – Maria José Aubet, Anna Maria Bisi (†), Manuela Barthelemy, Josep Fontana, Ingrid Gamer-Wallert, Gustav Gamer, Milagros Gil-Mascarell (†), Vicente Lull, Juan Maluquer de Motes (†), Sabatino Moscati (†), Hans Georg Niemeyer, Manuel Pellicer, Rafael Puertas, Wolfgang Röllig, Diego Ruiz Mata, Javier Teixidor, Hermanfrid Schubart and Giovanni Tore (†) – I must now add the no less valuable and patient collaboration of a lot of people who during this time have provided criticism and information I was not aware of, and whose collaboration has greatly speeded the revision of this work. My thanks on that score go to my friends Margarita

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Lastly, I should like to express my thanks to my students of the 'Guadalhorce' and Tyre teams, whose criticisms, interest, dissent and eternal 'whys' have forced me to revise many ideas and not a few theoretical inflexibilities.

Introduction

Nowadays anyone intending to embark for the first time on a study of the Phoenician colonization of the Iberian Peninsula, or keen to know the state of archaeological investigation in that field, will come up against three types of difficulty: one of a technical nature, another of a methodological nature and a third concerning the question of subjectivity in reading the historical testimony.

Among the difficulties of a technical or instrumental nature, it is worthwhile pointing out the lack of up-to-date reports which provide a critical assessment of the archaeological data obtained in the past twenty years in the western Mediterranean; the vast literature that exists on the question is scattered in a multitude of articles in specialist journals, or in the proceedings of meetings not always accessible to students of the ancient world; lastly, there is the relative confusion in the way the terminology in use is handled: the words 'Phoenician', 'Punic' and 'orientalizing' are bandied about indiscriminately without establishing clear differences between them, or at times contradictory or incoherent terms are used, such as 'Iberico-orientalizing', 'Phoenicio–Punic' or 'Punico–archaic'. Obviously this does not help to make things easy for the reader, since behind this terminological confusion lie much more complex methodological and conceptual problems.

As regards the difficulties of a methodological nature, it must be emphasized that a reconstruction of the history of Phoenician trade in Spain, or in the Mediterranean in general, must of necessity be based on two types of documentary sources or instruments of analysis, which very often disagree with each other: the written testimonies handed down to us by the classical historians and the archaeological record proper. The divergences between these two categories of data raise a host of difficulties for investigators and these are not always easy to resolve. Thus, for example, the discrepancies that occur

between the historical dates given by the classical historians and the chronology established by archaeological investigation have fuelled, among other things, the prolongation of a controversy already endemic among orientalists; it began in the nineteenth century and concerns the dating of the first Phoenician foundations in the far west. This is a controversy that will probably be resumed in the coming years when the methods of absolute dating, that have been in use for years in prehistoric archaeology (see Appendix III), begin to be applied to the archaeological record of the Phoenician settlements.

The classical sources are of vital importance in an analysis of the Phoenician question if they are handled prudently. It must not be forgotten that certain legendary aspects concerning Phoenician colonization in Spain were picked up by Greek and Roman historians many centuries after the events took place and the only contemporary written sources for the Phoenician diaspora – the Assyrian annals and the Biblical texts – make no mention of anything that happened further away than the island of Cyprus. Even so, the classical texts contain valuable information concerning the Phoenician expansion westwards. It is on how these sources are managed that the historical reconstruction of the past depends to a large extent. Archaeology, on the other hand, provides us with information that is basically empirical, a kind of general framework that can be used as a starting point for working hypotheses. Nowadays, any explanation of the Phoenician colonial phenomenon is likely to be analysed on the basis of new theories and from new methodological perspectives. Given that hypotheses cannot advance without some previously determined theoretical framework, we do not claim in this book simply to revise or update the subject of the Phoenicians in the west, but rather to raise a series of questions about the whole subject and, as far as possible, to give answers as well.

The third difficulty presented by a study of the Phoenicians in the far western Mediterranean lies in the inevitable subjectivism, not to say ideology, of those interpreting the data. The role played by the Phoenicians in the west has rarely been judged objectively. At times, they have been considered to have had very little effect on the internal cultural dynamics of the native Spanish communities, and their socio-cultural importance in the process of development that was to culminate in the realm of Tartessos in western Andalusia has been played down. Logically, this leads to an over-valuation of the part played by indigenous Iberians or of the specific influence of the later Greek colonization in nurturing the economic power of Tartessos.

At other times, the Phoenicians are ascribed more importance than they had in reality and they are portrayed as the only protagonists in the cultural process which gave rise to the Tartessian cultural group and the formation of the state in the west. This view undervalues the indigenous peoples in favour of the idea that the Phoenicians arrived in a territory inhabited by a few passive, receptive communities – the Tartessians – who were ignorant of the enormous economic potential of their territory. Thanks to the 'eastern miracle', it is thought, Tartessos set about exploiting its abundant mineral and agricultural resources.

On the other hand, the treatment meted out to the Phoenicians in the classical texts, and even today on the part of some historians, does not exactly give us an impartial and objective picture of their historical and cultural standing. In a way it is understandable that, for political reasons, the classical authors branded the Phoenicians as pirates, as cunning navigators, and held them responsible for introducing greed and luxury into Greece. It is equally acceptable that the Romans should show outright hostility towards them, speaking of 'perfidious Punica', its proverbial cunning, its disloyalty and low moral sense. What is less understandable is the reason why even today some historians insist on the poor quality of Phoenician art, its lack of originality and that, unlike the Greeks, the Phoenicians were more interested in making profits than in producing poets, artists and historians.

However, the Phoenicians' principal legacy to the history of the west – the alphabet – is now unanimously acknowledged. The signs and names used by the Phoenicians to designate the letters of the alphabet – alef, bet and so on – have been preserved down to our own day, thanks to the mediation of the Greek world.

The Phoenicians did not just give us a system of writing, they incorporated the Iberian Peninsula into the Mediterranean trade routes of the period, which for more than two hundred years tied many Mediterranean territories into an organizational structure and to certain institutions that were basically oriental. For a long time, the Phoenicians were the principal intermediaries between east and west and this role of mediators smoothed out to a considerable extent the socio-economic imbalances which existed previously between those states said to be 'civilized' and the 'barbarian' peoples. On their arrival in the Iberian Peninsula at the turn of the eighth century BC or a little earlier, the indigenous Andalusian communities were deeply rooted in

prehistoric economic structures that had grown out of the Bronze Age. When they left, at the beginning of the sixth century BC, the Peninsula was an integral part of that 'History' that bore their mark, and the indigenous cultural process had, by acculturation, acquired other ways of attaining more complex, in other words more 'modern', socio-economic levels.

This book will attempt to bring the reader and the student interested in the Phoenician question a synthesis of the present state of investigations and an outline of a new hypothesis about the Phoenicians and their colonial enterprise in the west.

The study covers the colonial period proper, that is to say, the ancient horizon of the eighth to sixth centuries BC. Consequently we shall not deal here with the so-called Punic horizon of the sixth to third centuries BC, a period in which many of the old colonial enclaves came into the orbit of Carthage. In reality, the Punic period corresponds to a quite distinct socio-political context, in which the geopolitical circumstances of the western Mediterranean experienced considerable transformations which would demand a separate study of their own.

To enclose or define the function and category of the Phoenician settlements in the west and in Andalusia within a particular macroeconomic and historical model requires, logically, an analysis of those political and economic factors in Phoenicia in general, and in Tyre in particular, which would have made this diaspora to the west possible or would have fostered it. In our judgement, only a critical examination of the economic, political and social situation in the city state of Tyre – mainly responsible for the colonization – and of its mercantile policy could help us to gauge the category and economic function of the centres in the west. That is why we give priority to a study of the political and economic situation in the Phoenician cities before, during and after the period of expansion through the Mediterranean.

The question of who the Phoenicians were seems to us a good starting point if we are to place the circumstances that prompted this people to organize a commercial enterprise on such a scale at the beginning of the first millennium BC in their historical and geographical context. Consequently, the first chapters are devoted to analysing the identity of the Phoenician people, starting from ethnic, linguistic, geographical and historical factors. These are followed by a section devoted to the way in which the Phoenicians organized their trade and

navigation during the period of colonization, so as to be able finally to tackle the study and interpretation of the colonial enclaves in the central Mediterranean and the Iberian Peninsula, equipped with the elements appropriate to forming a judgement.

1

Who were the Phoenicians?

THE NAME: CANA'ANI, PHOÍNIKES, POENI

A study of the terminology used to define a community or population is a question that goes far beyond a simple exercise in historical erudition when, as in the case of the Phoenicians, not all the ethnic, linguistic, geographic or cultural implications appear with sufficient clarity. The theme of the name by which antiquity knew the Phoenicians provides a starting point of undeniable importance for determining the features that identify this eastern population.

The name by which history knows the Phoenicians is a word of Greek origin, which appears for the first time in the period of Homer and Hesiod – in the ninth to seventh centuries BC – and has no known equivalent in the eastern languages.

The original name *phoinix* and its derivatives, the feminine *phoinissa* and the plural *phoínikes*, are a Greek invention and nobody but the Greeks used the term to designate this eastern people and certain cultural features connected with them. The word used to designate the country of the *phoínikes*, *Phoiníke*, comes rather later and refers to the coastal territory between Aradus (Arvad) and Mount Carmel, with boundaries corresponding roughly to those of modern Lebanon (Fig. 1).

The root of *phoinix* is neither Phoenician nor Semitic and at present the etymological problem of the origin of the Greek word has not been solved. What does seem to have been verified is that the Phoenicians never called themselves 'Phoenicians'. Already in antiquity, the Greeks were trying to find an explanation for the origin of the name, connecting its ethnic meaning with other semantic equivalents of the same word. Among other meanings of *phoinix*, we would single out that of 'red', a colour that probably would have alluded to the purple textile industry, for which the Phoenician cities were famous in Homer's time.

According to this etymology, 'Phoenician' would be derived from the Greek *phoinós,* a word of Indo-European root indicating 'red', 'blood', 'to stain with blood', 'death' or 'crime'. Greek lexicographers linked the origin of the word with the manufacture of purple textiles and also with the dark complexion of the Asian peoples, and the majority of modern authors keep to that explanation. According to them, when maritime contacts between Greece and the Levant were renewed in the time of Homer, the Greeks would have begun to call the inhabitants of a country which was held to be the most powerful centre for the manufacture of purple cloth in the whole Mediterranean 'reds', or 'phoínikes'. So Phoenicia would mean 'the country of purple cloth'.

Another theory concerning the origin of the word 'Phoenician' postulates a connection between that word and the eponymous hero *Phoinix,* to whom legend attributes the invention of the purple dye that was to colour wools and fabrics. This legend, picked up by Pliny, tells of the chance discovery near Tyre by a shepherd and his dog that by biting a mollusc – no doubt the murex – he had stained himself red; the dog was brought before the king of Tyre, Phoinix, who is thought to have adopted the colour purple as a sign of royalty and an emblem of the monarchy. After that, purple could only be worn by kings. That this legend is Phoenician in origin would be shown by the fact that some coins from Tyre carry the image of the famous animal.

In other myths, Phoinix appears as the father of the Phoenicians and eponymous with the territory, the 'Phoiniké'. He is also frequently considered to be one of the brothers of Europa; during his travels in search of his ravished sister, he is believed to have settled in a country to which he gave his name, as did her other brothers: Cadmos in Thebes, Syros in Syria and Cilix in Cilicia.

As can be inferred from all these myths and legends, Phoinix, the eponymous hero of the country, is none other than the king of Tyre, who combines in his person all the characteristic attributes that give authentic identity to the Phoenician people: the purple, the alphabet (the *phoinikeia grammata,* also invented by the hero) and the date palm, another emblem of Tyre's coinage, called *phoinix* in Greek.

In Homer, Hesiod and Herodotus, the word *phoinix* also designates a musical instrument similar to the lyre (also invented by Phoinix), a place name frequently found in the eastern Mediterranean and, lastly, a fabulous bird with red wings, the *ave fenix,* of unknown origin. All these meanings of *phoinix* are said to be derived from their country of origin,

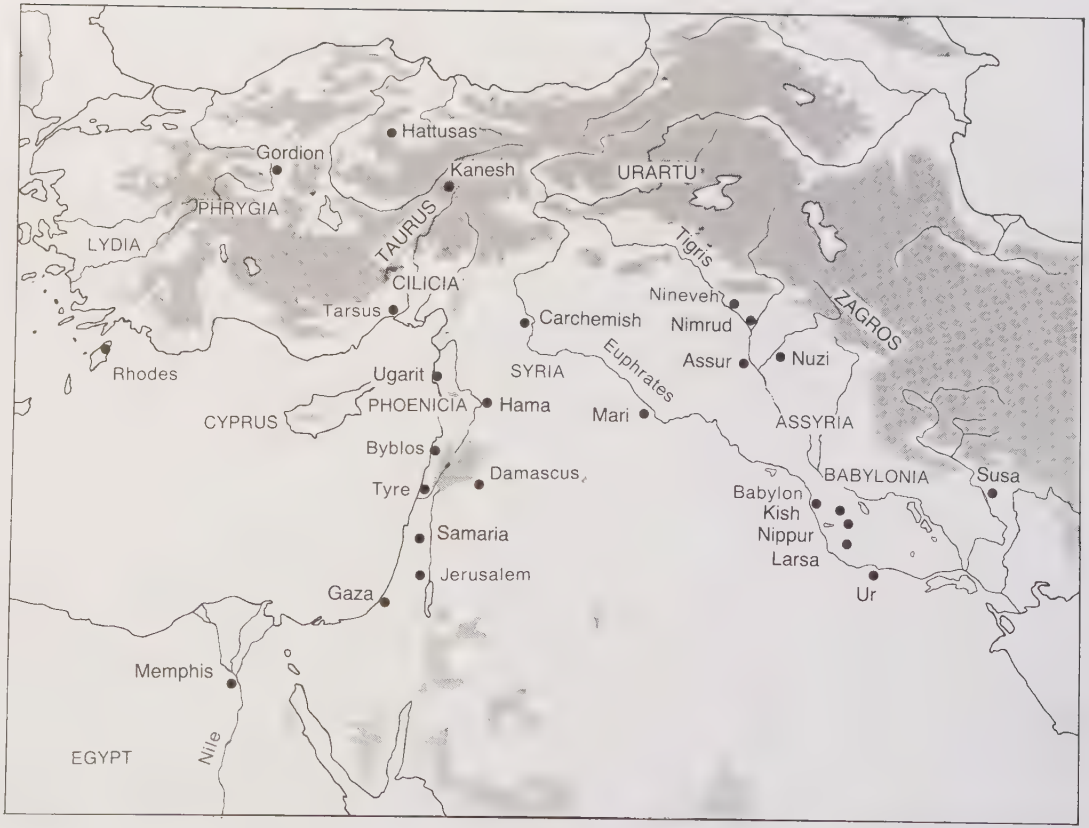


Fig. 1 The Near East

Phoenicia, which in turn had taken this name from the Greek word used for the colour dark red. Moreover, it is surprising that the name given to an industry or its colour should lie at the origin of the name of the territory and its inhabitants. Why should the opposite not be true?

That the origin of the term is confused can be seen in those same Homeric texts, where the Phoenicians are also called *sidones* or *sidonioi,* that is Sidonians. Nor can the use by Homer of the term sidonian as a synonym for *phoínikes* be explained, since, in the days of the poet, the most powerful Phoenician city was not Sidon but Tyre. In short, all this indicates the difficulties the Greek world found in drawing up an ethno-political definition of the Phoenicians: a people without a state, without territory and without political unity.

Other theories deny any connection between 'Phoenicians' and *phoinós* ('red') and claim to derive the Greek word from the Mycenean *po-ni-ki-jo* or *po-ni-ki.* This word, which is documented in Linear B texts from Knossos and Pylos, refers to an aromatic herb or condiment of eastern origin – perhaps Pliny's 'herba phoenica' – and also to elements used in decoration, presumably red in colour, and seems to have been coined at the end of the second millennium BC, a period when contacts between the Aegean and the Levant were most intense and when the legends of Cadmos, Phoinix and the rape of Europa are likely to have emerged. However, we must point out that none of the Mycenean texts mentioned seems to refer explicitly to a country, its inhabitants or the colour purple.

The origin of the Greek *phoinix* has been sought with equal lack of success in Ugaritic or Hebrew words like *puwwa* or *pwt* – 'dye', 'substance' – and even in Egyptian *fnḫw* whose similarities to the Greek 'Phoenician' are purely accoustic. The word *fenkhu,* documented from the ancient Egyptian empire, has no connection whatsoever with Phoenicia, which the Egyptians in fact called 'Retenu' or 'Ḫa-rw'.

From all that has been said, we deduce that the only clear evidence we have is the Greek name *phoínikes* with which, from the time of Homer, the Greeks designated the peoples of the Levant and in particular the eastern traders who were beginning to frequent the waters of the Aegean. The origin of the Greek term is still unclear today.

We know that the Phoenicians called themselves *can'ani,* 'Canaanites', and their land Canaan. This term is of eastern Semitic origin and very probably indigenous to the country. The etymology of the word, starting with *kn'n,* however, is just as obscure and controversial as the Greek *phoinix,* if not more so.

In Genesis (9:18, 10:15) Canaan is the son of Ham and father of Sidon, that is of the Phoenicians, like the eponymous Phoinix. The biblical texts use the name *kena'anîm* or *kananaioi* to designate the inhabitants of the great coastal plain to the north of Israel, which doubtless implies a relatively uniform geographic, linguistic and cultural reality. On occasions, however, the term Canaan refers to a more restricted territory, confined to the area round Tyre (Isaiah 23:11). The Phoenicians were also frequently called by the name of their city of origin – Tyrians, Sidonians, Giblites – or simply, in biblical and Assyrian documents, *sîdonim* or *sidonioi,* as in Homer. The king of Tyre is also called 'king of the Sidonians', a very significant fact which doubtless reflects a specific geo-political situation, particularly during the tenth to eighth centuries BC, which we shall examine in the next chapter.

In Hebrew, *cana'ani* or *kina'nu* also means 'merchant', so Canaan would have been synonymous with 'land of merchants'. Yet again, a profession that made the Phoenicians so renowned would have lent its name to a territory. And so the hypothesis that the name of the territory ended by designating one of the most characteristic activities of the inhabitants, that of trade, would again be the most convincing.

Some linguists claim that the Greek *phoinix* is no more than a simple translation of the Akkadian *kinaḫḫu,* a word which appears in texts of the fifteenth to fourteenth centuries BC found at Nuzi. In these documents the term alludes indiscriminately to the country of Canaan and to its most important export, red-coloured wool or *kinaḫḫu.* According to that, the Hurrite texts of Nuzi seem to show not only the semantic parallel existing between 'canaanite' and 'purple' but also a direct association between the name of the country and the colour purplish red, both in Akkadian and in Greek. However, this does not solve the problem of who gave the name to whom, whether the territory to the colour or vice versa. All the indications point to the first possibility.

Indeed, ever since the middle of the fifteenth century BC, in other Levantine and Egyptian texts and inscriptions, we meet the name of the country Canaan without it being in any way associated with the colour red. Thus it is mentioned as *kn'ny* in texts from Ugarit, as *ki-in-a-nim* in texts from Alalakh and as *kn'nw* in inscriptions of Amenophis II. So too in texts from Mari, the Canaanites are mentioned with a strictly ethnic meaning and in the famous letters of El Amarna, dated to the first half of the fourteenth century BC, the inhab-

itants of the land of Canaan are called the *kinaḫḫi* or *kinaḫna*. Lastly, with corroboration from the recent finds at Ebla in Syria, the name of Canaan, signifying a place – *ca-na-na-um, ca-na-na* – would probably have arisen as early as the middle of the third millennium BC.

All this etymological discussion brings us back to where we started. The Nuzi texts demonstrate that since the middle of the second millennium BC at least, the name 'Canaan' has a dual meaning: ethnic and toponymic on the one hand and for the colour red or purple on the other. So an obvious parallel with the etymology of the Greek *phoinix* is established. In both cases, the purple cloth and dyeing industries would have taken the name of the country of origin. The Greeks of the Mycenean period or the beginning of the first millennium BC could have come across a place name designating the colour red and with an equivalent in their idiom, *phoinix*, and all they would have done is translate it.

Philo of Byblos and Hecateus of Miletus in their day reached the same conclusions. In the sixth century BC, Hecateus remembered that *Phoiníke* had previously been called *Chna* and that it had been the transcription into Greek of the Semitic 'Chanaan'. Philo of Byblos argues on the same lines: he mentions a historical personage called *Chnas* or *Chanaan* who was later rebaptized with the name of 'Phoinix' and called 'father of the Phoenicians'. Consequently, the eponymous hero Phoinix would be the transcription into Greek of another eponymous Semitic hero, Canaan, son of Ham. It is obvious, therefore, that the correct and original name of the Phoenicians was Canaanites. This is what their Asian and Egyptian neighbours called them and this is what they called themselves. In the Roman and late Roman periods, they were still known by the name of 'Canaanites'. The evangelist Matthew (15:21–22) called the Phoenician woman whose daughter was cured by Jesus of demonic possession a Canaanite; St Augustine (Ep. ad Rom. 13) mentions that in his day (fifth century AD) the North African citizens (the Carthaginians) still called themselves *chanani*.

However, we know the Phoenicians by the name the Greeks gave them and not by their original name. The Hellenic term has been definitively consecrated by usage, which obliges us to make a few observations of a conceptual and chronological nature.

In modern terminology, it is customary to use the name 'Canaanite' to designate those peoples who spoke North West Semitic and lived in the territory of Syria–Palestine at least from the beginning of the

second millennium BC. These same populations, who have a common historical, geographic, cultural and linguistic base, are known as Phoenicians from the year 1200 BC onwards, thus establishing an artificial barrier between the Bronze Age and the Iron Age and conferring chronological implications on the two terms. According to this, the 'Phoenician' succeeded the 'Canaanite' from 1200 BC until the conquest by Alexander the Great in 333 BC. The year 1200 BC was fixed by the historians as a frontier separating the Canaanite Bronze Age from the Phoenician Iron Age on the basis of the geo-political changes that took place in the zone following the political convulsions which shook the eastern Mediterranean at the end of the Bronze Age. In the next section, we shall see that these events in no way justify a change of nomenclature in the history of the Canaanite territory.

Equally dubious is the terminology used to define the Phoenicians in the west. The contradictions arise from the name used by classical historians who use the words 'Phoenician', 'Punic' and 'Carthaginian' indiscriminately to refer to the western Phoenicians who were fighting against Rome. If the word 'Carthaginian' raises no major difficulties because it is synonymous with 'inhabitant of Carthage', analogous with Gaditanian or Tyrian, the word 'Punic' requires some clarification.

The Roman authors use the term *poenus* and *phoenix*, which are merely a transcription into Latin of the Greek *phoinix*, changing the first consonant, to designate the Phoenicians in general and the Carthaginians in particular, without making any clearer distinction. *Poenus*, with its adjectives *punicus* or *poenicus*, generally alludes to the North African Phoenicians, because the terms 'Punic' and 'Carthaginian' tend to be used interchangeably.

It is modern historians who have magnified the distance between 'Punic' and 'Phoenician' with implications of a geographic and chronological nature very similar to those existing between the terms 'Phoenician' and 'Canaanite' in the east. In modern writings, the Phoenicians in the east are called 'Phoenician' and the Phoenicians of the west, living in the sphere of influence of Carthage, are called 'Punic'. This presents us with a new terminological and conceptual problem: what to call the Phoenicians of the west before the time when Carthage assumed political and military hegemony there. This event took place in the sixth century BC and so the ancient period of the eighth to sixth centuries BC remains to be defined, the strictly colonial and commercial period, that is to say, precisely the one we are dealing

with in this book and which embraces several generations of Phoenician colonists arriving from the east who, in a very short time, settled and prospered in the west.

Faced with the relatively late meaning attributed to the term 'Punic', covering basically the sixth to second centuries BC, the terms 'Phoenician' or 'western Phoenician' are situated earlier in order to designate those groups and settlements established in the west before the Carthaginian empire. Exceptionally, a few historians prefer to call only the first generation of colonists arriving in the west 'Phoenician' and all the rest 'Punic', or to use the term 'paleo-Punic' to define this ancient colonial horizon.

While admitting the incongruity of fixing chronological limits to terms which, originally, were not supposed to be exclusive, we shall use the current nomenclature in this book since all these words nowadays have clearly defined cultural connotations. So we shall call the Phoenicians of the second millennium BC 'Canaanites', the Phoenicians of the first millennium BC in the east and of the eighth to sixth centuries in the west 'Phoenicians' and the western Phoenicians from the middle of the sixth century BC onwards 'Punic'.

THE TERRITORY

The territory called Phoiníke by the Greeks extends along the coastal fringe of the eastern Mediterranean and its geographical boundaries coincide roughly with those of modern Lebanon. This region, which we call Phoenicia, situated between the mountains of Lebanon and the Mediterranean sea, is all that had been preserved of ancient Canaan, once the socio-political crisis that rocked the eastern Mediterranean between the years 1200 and 1100 BC had been surmounted (Fig. 2).

During the Bronze Age, the land of Canaan had included all the coastal territory of Syria–Palestine lying between the Mons Cassius in the north – near the mouth of the Orontes in Syria – and the Egyptian frontier in the south. Around the year 1200, the date that is used as a reference point to mark the transition to the Iron Age in Syria–Palestine, three decisive historical events were to prompt a general restructuring of the Canaanite territory: the Israelite conquest of the mountainous region to the south of Canaan (modern Palestine), the military occupation of the coast of Palestine on the part of the Philistines, and the establishment of the Aramaeans in the northern and northeastern territory of Canaan – modern Syria.

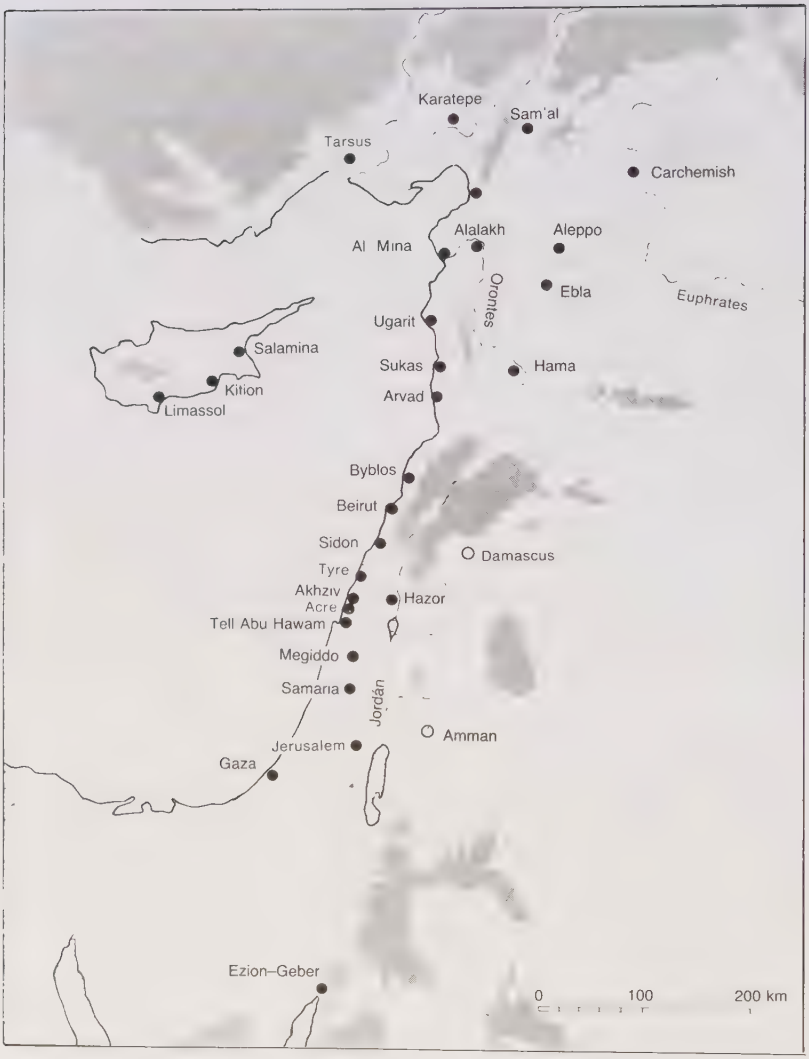


Fig. 2 The eastern Mediterranean

These incursions, which we shall study more thoroughly in the next chapter, would considerably reduce the extent of the country of Canaan which, in a very short time, lost three quarters of its territory, almost all its hinterland and more than half its coast.

At the beginning of the Iron Age, Phoenicia had shrunk from a distance of 500 km to little more than 200 km from north to south

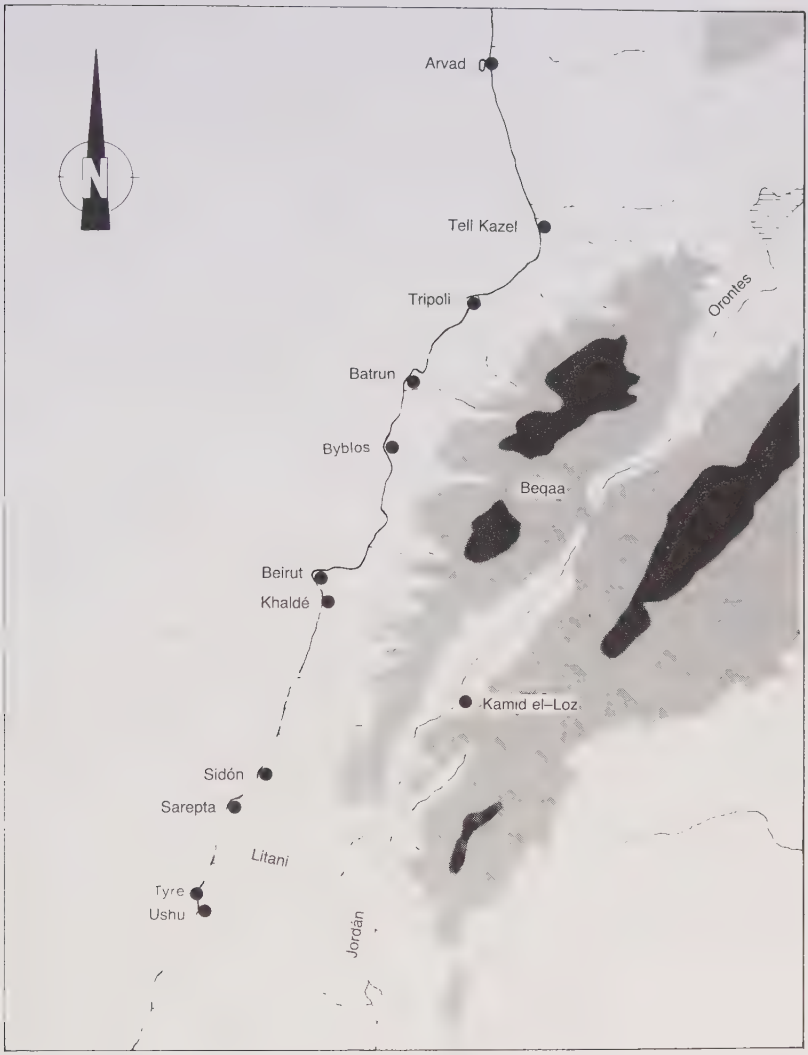


Fig. 3 Phoenicia

(Fig. 3). The reduction of its territory to a narrow coastal fringe, the eastern confines of which were formed by the final spurs of the mountains of Lebanon, was largely instrumental in deciding on the maritime adventure of its inhabitants. There can be no doubt that the reorganization of the Canaanite territory brought inevitable political, economic and demographic repercussions, as will be seen later.

The northern limits of the country remained firmly established to the north of the isle of Arvad, ancient Aradus, near the mouth of the Nahr-el-Kebir. The southern frontier remained at the level of Akko (Acre) and the promontory of Mount Carmel, although, occasionally, when the kingdom of Tyre extended its limits, this southern frontier moved a considerable distance southwards.

The eastern confines of Phoenicia were formed by the Lebanese mountains which run parallel with the coast and at some points reach a height of more than 3000 metres. The mountains of Lebanon, with their peaks and dense forests of cedars, would protect Phoenicia from incursions from the east while at the same time shaping a narrow territory crossed by little rivers and torrents which flowed through small transverse valleys, whose average length from east to west did not exceed 30 km.

The principal Phoenician cities were situated on the coast, on mainland promontories dominating a bay or on small natural inlets that gave ships protection from winds and storms and served as harbours. This is the case, for example, at Byblos, Berytos (Beirut), Sarepta, Sidon, Akko and Akhziv. Two cities, however, Tyre and Arvad, were located on islands close to the coast, which transformed them into genuinely impregnable fortresses so long as they kept their control of the sea. Nowadays, Tyre forms a peninsula joined to the mainland, due to sediments that have accumulated around the mole built by Alexander the Great during his blockade of the city.

Not only could Phoenicia count on a coastal territory ideal for shipping but it also enjoyed a mild climate, not unlike that of today, and a countryside rich in valleys, watercourses and an exceedingly fertile agricultural soil. Even so, the land suitable for cultivation was nowhere near adequate to support an extremely dense population.

In addition to its agricultural potential, Phoenicia had other resources at its disposal, the most important of all being the vast forest wealth of the interior. If the landscape nowadays is considerably degraded due to intense exploitation of the timber in its forests, with the consequent deforestation of huge areas just behind the coast, in Phoenician times the interior was covered with cedars, pines and cypresses which were exploited and contributed to the wealth, fame and prosperity of cities which, like Byblos, furnished Egypt and Mesopotamia with cedarwood for building.

Moreover, the Phoenician cities could count on plenty of game in the neighbouring mountains – bears, panthers and wolves, for

example – and on important iron and lignite mines, which no doubt contributed to the development of their famous shipyards.

The Phoenicians obtained abundant material from the sea, in particular the murex, a mollusc which they used to develop profitable dyeing and purple-cloth industries. The salting of fish was another of the industries that benefited the port cities.

In short, we can state that, reduced to a narrow coastal territory, the Phoenicians had no alternative but to operate within the limits of a mountainous hinterland, rich in wood and iron suitable for the development of shipbuilding enterprises, a coast with enormous possibilities for creating fishing industries, and arable land which, in some areas, was unable to supply the demands of cities that, at times, sheltered huge concentrations of humanity.

On the other hand, the geography of the coastal plain, made up of compartmentalized regions separated from each other by river valleys and mountain spurs, formed a kind of internal patchwork which favoured the development of independent political units organized into city states. All this, combined with the growing competition between the main Phoenician ports, was a constant obstacle to the process of political unification and the building of a 'Phoenician nation', to which the Phoenicians never aspired, despite the fact that, for a long time, Tyre imposed its hegemony on a large part of the southern coast of Phoenicia. In spite of this, the Phoenician cities never managed to form themselves into a unified state, not even in circumstances of great danger and pressure from the Assyrian empire.

Phoenicia, then, was a land squeezed between the mountains and the sea, with a great density of population from the tenth century BC onwards and with the Mediterranean as the only possible route for natural expansion. The marked maritime leanings of its cities and their consequent control of the sea gave them naval supremacy and, at the same time, guaranteed their political independence in the face of powerful neighbours, and the independence of the main seaports from each other. In short, its maritime position was the key to the international politics of the period and to the interests of its neighbours in the interior. Proof of this is the fact that control of the Phoenician ports and their seaborne trade was at the origin of most of the power struggles, first with Egypt and, later, with Assyria. Control of the Phoenician cities and their trade gave Egypt supremacy over Asia, and Assyria over the Near East in general.

THE HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS: THE BRONZE AGE IN CANAAN

From the beginning of the third millennium BC the region of Syria–Palestine gravitated around great cities like Byblos, Tyre and Megiddo, which maintained intensive political and commercial relations with Mesopotamia and Egypt. Up until 2500 BC, the texts from Ebla call this territoy *Ga-na-ne* (Canaan) or *La-ba-na-an* (Lebanon).

During the Canaanite *Early Bronze Age* (3100–2300 BC) (Table 1), the most dynamic city, developing the greatest activity in the field of international relations, was undoubtedly Biblos or Byblos, as the Greeks called this trading port, the modern Jebeil, whose name was originally Gubla, Gubal or Gebal. As the principal Mediterranean port of the third millennium BC, Byblos was an integral part of the international political scene, thanks to its close ties with the pharaohs of Egypt, its principal customers, whom it supplied with large quantities of cedarwood for building. Some Egyptian inscriptions from around 2600 BC mention the ships of Byblos transporting wood and oil and also the acquisition of boats from Byblos by the Egyptian authorities. This is the most brilliant period of Byblos' trade and of its powerful shipbuilding industry.

For its part, Egypt's interest in Byblos takes the form of cultural and religious influence over the Canaanite city and the presence of governors and commercial agents sent by the pharaoh. In reality, Byblos would be an Egyptian colony during a large part of the Ancient Empire, and Canaan a vassal of the Egyptian sovereigns.

Recent archaeological discoveries at Ebla show that, between 2500 and 2300 BC, the Phoenician cities became the principal intermediaries in trade between the great Syrian states and the Nile Valley. In the archives at Ebla, various Canaanite cities are mentioned, outstanding amongst them *a-ra-wa-ad* (Arvad), *sa-ra-pa-at* (Sarepta), *ak-zi-u* (Akhziv), *ba-u-ra-at-tu* (Beirut), *za-a-ru* (Tyre) and *si-du-na-a* (Sidon), although it is Gub-lu, Gubli or Gubla that is always mentioned as the chief commercial centre and described as the capital of a powerful kingdom. In exchange for products from Ebla – metal, fabrics, perfumes, wine, oil and ewes – Byblos exported linen and, in particular, precious metals – gold and silver – to the interior.

So in the Early Bronze Age, some of the characteristic features that would define the later Phoenician world were taking shape: the important Egyptian or Egyptianizing component in its artistic, craft and

Table 1. *Phoenician chronologies*

	Amiran 1969		Baramki 1961	Bikai 1978
3100				
		I		
2980		II		
2650	Early Bronze		Early Bronze	Early Bronze
		III		
		IV		
2300				
2200		I		
1950				Middle Bronze
1900		II		
1730	Middle Bronze			
			Middle Bronze	
1600				
1550		III		
		I		
1400				
1300	Late Bronze	II A	Late Bronze	Late Bronze
		II B		
1200				
1150		I		
1050				
1000		II A	Early Iron	Early Iron
900	Iron			
800		II B		Middle Iron I
725			Middle Iron	
600		II C		Middle Iron II
550				
				Late Iron
			Late Iron	
330				
64			Hellenistic	Hellenistic

Fig. 4 Entrance gate to the temple of Baalat-Gebal in Byblos (*c.* 2800 BC)

religious manifestations; the role of intermediary between the Asian states of the interior and the Mediterranean and, lastly, the commercial and industrial vocation of its coastal cities.

The growing power of the monarchs of Byblos is made plain by their building activities, the most outstanding of all the monumental constructions being the great temple dedicated to Baalat-Gebal, the 'Lady of Byblos', the chief tutelary deity of the city (Fig. 4). Built in about 2800 BC, the numerous inscriptions and Egyptian offerings found inside the temple tell us of Egypt's interest in maintaining friendly political relations with the royal house of Byblos.

Another city that is mentioned repeatedly in the diplomatic documents of the period is Tyre, even though this centre did not equal the prestige of its northern neighbour during the third millennium. The name Tyre is also a Greek transcription of the original name, *Ṣor*, mentioned in the texts of Ebla. A legend picked up by the Greek historian Herodotus places the origins of Tyre around the year 2750 BC. Herodotus tells us that when he visited Tyre in the fifth century BC, he heard the priests in the temple of Melqart say that the sanctuary had been built when the city was founded, about 2300 years previously (Herod. 2:44). This legend, that the priests of the temple may have learned from the annals of the city, had not been taken seriously by any modern historian. However, the excavations carried out in

Fig. 5 The Temple of the Obelisks in Byblos (*c.* 1900–1550 BC)

1973–74 by the North American Patricia Bikai made it clear that the first human occupation of the island does indeed date from the middle of the third millennium, the time when monumental buildings, possibly temples, were being erected in Tyre. The founding of Tyre is thus 'very ancient' in the words of Isaiah (23:7) or 'older than Sidon' (Strabo 16:2, 22).

At the end of the Early Bronze Age, Tyre, like Byblos, shows signs of having been abandoned or destroyed. Indeed, the period between 2300 and 1900 BC is characterized by a break in the seaborne traffic to Egypt as a consequence of the invasion of Syria–Palestine by the Amurru or Amorites, nomadic Semitic groups who, after burning and sacking the main Canaanite cities, entrenched themselves in the internal centres of the country, Aleppo and Mari. Once this crisis was over, Byblos appears once more as a prosperous city whose interests again coincide with those of Egypt.

For a good part of the Canaanite *Middle Bronze Age* (1900–1550 BC), Egypt again exercised sovereignty over the chief cities of Canaan: Byblos, Ugarit and Megiddo. The Egyptian texts now speak of an independent monarchy in Tyre, and Byblos is mentioned as a bridgehead of Egyptian domination over the Levant. The famous Egyptian-inspired Temple of the Obelisks at Byblos (Fig. 5) and the royal tombs – great hypogean or subterranean tombs hewn out of the rock, where the monarchs of Byblos

Fig. 6 Gate to the city of Ugarit

are accompanied by splendid gold and alabaster vessels – date from this period. As can be inferred from certain Mesopotamian texts and from archaeological finds, Byblos and Ugarit also maintained trading relations with Crete, Mari and Ur during this period.

During the *Late Bronze Age* (1550–1200 BC) the cities of Ugarit (Fig. 6), Byblos and Tyre came to form part of the great Mediterranean trading networks which linked Egypt, Mycenae, Syria–Palestine and Mesopotamia. The fourteenth century BC in particular coincides with the period of greatest commercial and maritime activity by the Canaanite cities, which were an integral part of the Egyptian province of Syria–Palestine during the Eighteenth Dynasty.

A considerable part of the diplomatic correspondence kept up by the kings of Byblos and Tyre with the pharaohs Amenophis III and Akhenaton has been preserved. Discovered at the Egyptian site of El Amarna and written in Akkadian cuneiform, the letters of Abi-Milki, king of Tyre, and Rib-Addi, king of Byblos, provide us with valuable political and economic information about Canaan during the fourteenth century BC. In them, the Canaanite monarchs insist on their loyalty to Egypt while announcing the despatch of ships loaded with cedarwood to the Nile, as an expression of tribute with, apparently, no counterpart from Egypt.

In the correspondence from El Amarna, Tyre is described for the first time as a monarchy, enjoying prestige and political influence. The establishment at this date of a great satellite city on the mainland – Ushu or Palaeotyre – no doubt reflects a demographic highpoint in that Canaanite state, even though its king, Abi-Milki, is already alluding in his letters to a certain political crisis in the interior of his territory and to a situation of generalized insurrection in the Syrian cities, in the face of the apparent indifference, if not impotence, of Egypt. This, then, heralds the changes that were to mark the transition to the Iron Age in Canaan; they imply loss of prestige by the Egyptian power in the region and a profound transformation of the geo-political scene in the Levant as its main repercussions.

The texts from Ugarit and other recently excavated Canaanite centres like Kamid el-Loz have, moreover, made a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the Canaanite language of the second millennium and its dialectal variants, the evolution of its system of writing, and its epics and poetry.

The alphabet, which is documented in cuneiform since the fifteenth century in Ugarit, is a Canaanite invention which would have replaced the older pseudo-hieroglyphic and syllabic writing, known through the discoveries at Byblos. The consonantic writing of Ugarit, expressed by means of graphic signs taken from the Mesopotamian cuneiform and consisting of thirty letters or signs, was definitively reduced to the twenty-two letters of the conventional alphabet from the twelfth century BC.

Furthermore, the discoveries at Ebla (Fig. 7) and Ugarit demonstrate that the Canaanite language, already documented during the third millennium, forms part of a group of languages called 'Semitic of the northwest', quite distinct from other more eastern groups such as Akkadian and Babylonian, and it presents a host of dialects and local variants from at least the second millennium. The Phoenician language of the first millennium is nothing more than a direct descendant of this common Canaanite stem and in its turn shows a diversity of dialectal variants – Giblite, Tyrian, and so on.

The Bronze Age in Canaan ends with generalized symptoms of regression, crisis, destruction or socio-political decline. The destruction and final abandonment of Ugarit around 1190 forms part of the succession of events in Canaan at the end of the Bronze Age, especially the Israelite invasion around 1230 BC and the general instability produced by the so-called 'Sea Peoples'. These latter, outstanding among

Fig. 7 View of the excavations at Ebla

them the Philistines of obscure origin, after laying waste the Hittite empire and destroying numerous Canaanite cities, took possession of the southern coastal territory of Canaan around 1180 BC. To these Philistines, who gave their name to that part of the country – Philistia–Palestine – is attributed the introduction of iron metallurgy into the Levant. All these events had as a consequence a cultural and political vacuum which ultimately facilitated the incursion of the Aramaic tribes who occupied the interior of the territory – modern Syria – towards the eleventh century BC.

Recent studies of the so-called 'crisis of 1200', carried out by Muhly and Liverani, have made plain the extent to which the destructions by the 'sea peoples' have been exaggerated when it comes to explaining the changes in the eastern Mediterranean in the twelfth century. In fact, the empirical proofs relating to the invading peoples become less and less convincing, and even Ugarit shows signs of internal disintegration a little before 1200. Neither in Ugarit nor in neighbouring Ras Ibn Hani is the presence of intrusive pottery observed after the crisis, which suggests that it was probably internal socio-political factors that were responsible for the destruction of that centre.

The port city discovered on the island of Ras Ibn Hani, 5 km to the south of Ugarit, was contemporary with the last period of the existence of the Canaanite capital and served as a second residence for the

kings of Ugarit. The royal palace was destroyed by a violent fire around 1200 but the site was not abandoned since, at the beginning of the twelfth century, on the debris of the residential zone, houses were being built as were structures associated with locally produced Mycenean pottery of the IIIC:1 type, that is to say the kind of pottery characteristic of the transition to the Iron Age throughout the Levant and Cyprus.

The case of Ras Ibn Hani is not unique, since evidence of constructional and cultural continuity can be seen in the Phoenician cities of Tyre – where no level of destruction is to be found between stratum XV (Late Bronze Age) and the levels corresponding to the Iron Age – and Sarepta, where, likewise, there is no gap to be seen in the passage from the Late Bronze Age (stratum F) to the Iron Age (strata E–D).

In general, the twelfth century reflects political and social changes rather than a generalized break. If there were indeed invasions and destructions in the Mediterranean Levant, they could have been the consequence – and not the cause – of the disintegration of the centralized and monopolistic political units of the Bronze Age – Mycenae, Ugarit, Hattusa – and of the consequent decline in interregional trade. Proof of this is the fact that the transition to the Iron Age in the coastal cities of Syria–Palestine is marked by an emphatic interruption of imports and by the suspension of contacts with Cyprus and the Aegean, which would not be resumed until the tenth century BC.

The crisis of the Final Bronze Age ended in a general reorganization of the old country of Canaan which found itself reduced to what would properly be called Phoiníke or Phoenicia. The period of transition to the Iron Age in Phoenicia, dated to 1200–1050 BC, is obscure and almost devoid of political activity although, as we shall see, a slow and gradual recovery was experienced in many of its coastal cities. Commercial activity was likewise reduced to a minimum, inasmuch as the Philistine fleet blockaded the principal ports and lessened the chances of an immediate naval and mercantile recovery between 1070 and 975 BC. It is important to gauge this period of inactivity of the Phoenician cities very carefully, since some of the written sources of the Hellenistic epoch situate the Tyrian founding of Gadir, and so the start of Tyre's commercial diaspora, at these very dates.

2

Phoenicia during the Iron Age

During the first millennium the principal Phoenician cities suffered a series of vicissitudes which obliged them to make successive readjustments to the direction of their commercial policy. It is in fact during one of those phases of reorientation of their economic policy that favourable conditions arose for initiating a process of maritime expansion westwards.

In this chapter, we shall not attempt an analysis of Phoenician history as such, by looking at a succession of political or dynastic events; we simply hope to highlight those socio-economic factors and variables that built up throughout the Iron Age to produce at a particular point in time a situation of such tension that Tyre was left with no alternative but to expand towards the west. In this framework it is important to understand how the commercial policy of the Phoenician cities, and of Tyre in particular, evolved and was continually being readjusted, if we are to analyse the causes that impelled Tyre to undertake this long-distance commercial and colonial venture, and grasp the real scope of the Phoenician settlements in the west and in the south of the Iberian Peninsula.

THE LITERARY SOURCES

The people who bequeathed the alphabet to humanity and had produced the extraordinary Canaanite literature of the second millennium have, paradoxically, left very little written documentation concerning the first millennium. Probably the scarcity of written documents is not fortuitous, since the institution of the palace as the main centre of economic activity and adminstrative management of inter-regional trade disappeared in 1200.

In relative terms, we know much more about the Phoenicians in the west than in their own homeland; hence modern manuals devote

much more space to the western Phoenicians than to those in the east. This is due principally to two factors: the dearth of direct, or genuinely Phoenician historical references and the paucity of the archaeological record concerning the great cities of the Iron Age. Consequently, we are faced with a mass of decontextualized empirical information.

In order to reconstruct the history of the Phoenician cities we rely on three groups of written sources: the Assyrian annals, the biblical texts and the references passed down by a few classical authors. It is a partial and, in some cases, tendentious set of documents in the sense that it consists of political propaganda – the Assyrian annals – or overtly hostile texts – in the Bible – and accounts written long after the events they are describing – the classical literature.

Even so, the importance of these literary sources is considerable, provided the reader looks critically at the data. So, for example, the Assyrian annals, intended basically to extol the monarchs, provide valuable information about the payments and tributes imposed on the kings of the Phoenician coast and about the volume of commercial transactions and the merchandise supplied to the Assyrian Empire by the Phoenician cities.

The texts of the Old Testament contain first-hand documentation about the political pacts and trade agreements signed by the monarchs of Tyre and Israel, while at the same time reflecting the misgivings of the Israelite ideologists in the face of Tyre's excessive political and ideological power over the northern territory of Israel. This unease is made manifest specifically in the writings of Ezekiel and Isaiah.

However, we know that the Phoenicians, like all the peoples of western Asia, had their own historical annals and their own poets and writers. Flavius Josephus mentions the existence of some Annals in Tyre. There are also allusions in Isaiah to the fame of the poets of Tyre and Sidon, and great thinkers and historians are mentioned who lived in Beirut and Tyre.

In his well-known works *Antiquitates Judicae* and *Contra Apionem*, written in the first century AD, Flavius Josephus recalls that there existed very ancient chronicles in Tyre, in which the names and deeds of the most outstanding kings of the city were recorded. Josephus also mentions a Greek author of the Hellenistic period, Menander of Ephesus, as the translator of the chronicle of the kings of Tyre. Although he was guilty of some contradictions, it is known that Josephus copied the translation of the *History of the Phoenicians* by Menander, based on a *History of Tyre*, which the writer from Ephesus

was apparently able to consult personally among the official documents preserved in the said Phoenician city.

Flavius Josephus mentions too the existence in Tyre of a royal archive, which still in his day preserved a copy of the diplomatic correspondance between Hiram I and Solomon and was kept by public officials in charge of the state archives.

From all this we can infer that royal annals existed in Tyre, containing archive material, the names of the kings of the city and the most outstanding events of each reign. These 'Annals of Tyre' must be similar to the 'Annals of the Kings of Judah', a work that has been lost but that provided considerable material to the writers of the Book of Kings. We must therefore conclude that in the course of the tenth to eighth centuries BC, a literary genre developed in Phoenicia and Israel which was historiographic in character and of which only fragments or indirect reports have been preserved. In spite of the gaps in his work, the list of the kings of Tyre handed down to us by Flavius Josephus forms one of the most important sources of historical information for the reconstruction of the history of the Phoenician city during the period of her expansion westwards.

There is mention of a second monumental work of Phoenician historiography which we know through the fragments preserved by Philo of Byblos, a Greek writer of the first to second centuries AD. Philo asserts that he translated into Greek, in eight volumes, a 'Phoenician History' by the Phoenician author Sanchuniathon or Sakkunyaton, who is thought to have lived in Beirut or Tyre at the end of the second millennium BC.

We are indebted for all we know about Philo of Byblos to Eusebius of Caesarea, a writer of the second to third centuries AD, who interpolated various extracts from the 'History' by Philo of Byblos into his work. Regarding the controversy aroused by Philo's work, and in particular because of its connections with Greek mythology, the fact should be emphasized that a Phoenician writer, Sanchuniathon, considered an authority on Phoenician history and religion, was living around the year 1000 BC and that we are indebted to him for a monumental 'History of the Phoenicians', compiled from the annals preserved in the temples of the principal Phoenician cities.

Various archaeological discoveries, such as those made in the archives of Ugarit and Kamid el-Loz, bear out what we have been saying, namely that there was a long tradition of Phoenician historiography, which had developed in connection with official and state bodies.

Lastly, in the account given by the Egyptian, Wen-Amon, dated to the year 1070 BC, explicit reference is made to the existence of diaries and official chronicles, written on papyrus and preserved in the Phoenician royal palaces. He also mentions that at the Phoenician court a detailed record was kept of commercial transactions and of the outstanding facts connected with the royal house. One of these transactions – the delivery of 500 rolls of papyrus by Wen-Amon to the king of Byblos in exchange for cedarwood – gives some idea of the volume of papyrus needed by the royal house of Byblos in order to keep its official records.

THE 'DARK' PERIOD OF THE TWELFTH AND ELEVENTH CENTURIES BC

After the crisis of 1200 BC, described in the previous chapter, the activity of the Phoenician cities remains virtually unknown. Nevertheless, although the main Bronze Age centres of Ugarit and Alalakh had been destroyed, with the consequent deterioration in international trade, there are indications that a few cities managed to recover and, in a very little while, to renew their commercial activities. This is so in the case of Byblos and Sidon, cities which were to dominate the political scene in Phoenicia in the Early Iron Age (1150–900 BC).

Taking their inspiration from local sources, various classical authors like Menander of Ephesus and Justinus (18:3, 5) announce that the city of Tyre was 'founded' by Sidonians in the year 1191 BC. The legend hints at the possibility that, after its destruction, Tyre was rebuilt under the auspices of Sidon, a city which all the evidence suggests was the most important centre in southern Phoenicia during the twelfth and eleventh centuries BC. This situation, in turn, explains the fact that at a later period Sidon would claim, at least on the coinage, that the city of Tyre was her daughter. 'Sidon, mother of Carthage, Hippo, Citium and Tyre', says the legend on the coins of the Hellenistic period.

In any case, it is worthwhile pointing out that, before Hiram I comes to the throne (969 BC), no mention of Tyre appears in official documents of the period. Neither does the city seem to generate any significant political activity, such as can be seen in the cities of Byblos and Sidon.

In the light of this evidence, no expert on Phoenician history in the east subscribes today to the theory that Tyre was colonizing the far

west of the Mediterranean at the end of the twelfth century BC. The likelihood of any international move by Tyre on the Mediterranean scene must be almost out of the question before the tenth century BC and, in our opinion, the political background that can be glimpsed in the Egyptian account by Wen-Amon and from a reading of the Book of Judges (1:31) provides a solid argument in support of this view. Indeed, from the time of Saul to David's victory over the Philistines, that is between the years 1050 and 975 BC, the Philistines and other groups of pirates issuing from the incursions of the so-called 'Sea Peoples' controlled all the coast between Gaza in the south and the territory of Mount Carmel and Tyre in the north, from time to time hampering shipping as far as the city of Sidon itself.

Moreover, in Assyrian inscriptions from the time of Tiglatpileser I (1114–1076 BC) mention is made of the tribute received by that monarch from the chief Phoenician cities: Sidon, Gubal and Arvad. There is no mention of Tyre among them.

Undoubtedly the most important document referring to this obscure period of Phoenician history is the account given by Wen-Amon, an envoy from the Egyptian authorities of the Twenty-First Dynasty to the Phoenician court with the aim of acquiring cedarwood. Wen-Amon has left us the most complete description we know of the Phoenician coast in the years 1075–1060 BC (Appendix 1). In it Tyre again appears to be relegated to a secondary status, whereas Byblos, followed by Sidon, occupies a privileged place in the international relations of the period.

Byblos is described as the most powerful port and the main exporter of cedarwood to Egypt. In return, the city obtained vast quantities of papyrus. At a later period, Byblos would develop into the major distribution centre for the Egyptian papyrus trade and would for a long time supply writing material to the Greek world. Furthermore, the word used by the Greeks to designate papyrus, *byblos*, would finally give its name to the Phoenician city of Gubal and to anything connected with paper and written books, including the 'good book', the Bible.

In Wen-Amon's account, the Phoenician coast appears to be dominated by Tjekker pirates, in spite of which Byblos managed to maintain its friendly trading links with Egypt. Nevertheless, the treatment received by Wen-Amon, the envoy of the pharaoh, indicates a change of attitude on the part of the arrogant Phoenician authorities as a result of the declining political prestige of Egypt.

The importance of Byblos declined shortly after Wen-Amon's visit. Probably the rapid growth of Tyre from the tenth century BC onwards damaged that city's commercial interests, as well as those of Sidon and Arvad.

However, we know the names of some of the kings of Byblos, such as Zakarbaal, the king who received Wen-Amon at his court, and, most notably Ahiram, who reigned in Byblos around the year 1000 BC and whose name has become famous thanks to the discovery of his sarcophagus, bearing one of the earliest known Phoenician inscriptions. Of Ahiram's successors we know little more than their names.

The city of Tyre, barely mentioned before the tenth century BC and considered as a satellite centre, dependent on Sidon at the beginning of the first millennium, came to occupy a position of hegemony in Phoenician history from the arrival on the throne of Hiram I (969–936 BC). With this monarch the Phoenicians' 'golden age' began and Tyre became the most important port in the Mediterranean. From the tenth century BC onwards, the history of Phoenicia merges into the history of Tyre.

TYRE IN ANTIQUITY

The Phoenician expansion westward was the work of the kingdom made up of Tyre and Sidon. It has occasionally been hinted that the colonization could have come from various cities on the Phoenician coast. However, the Old Testament is clear and categorical in this respect. The trading and seafaring city *par excellence* was Tyre and even when a state of Tyre–Sidon was in existence, the political and economic initiative and direction was in the hands of Tyre. It is therefore appropriate to discuss in detail here the characteristics of that city and its immediate surroundings on the basis of the literary and archaeological documentation.

Tyre is known nowadays by its Arab name of Ṣur. It is situated some 40 km to the south of Sidon and 45 km north of St John of Acre, the ancient Akko. Its original name was *Ṣor*, transcribed in the Assyrian annals as Sur-ri. The name by which we know it today is derived from the Greek transcription of Ṣor: Tyros.

Its present configuration is very different from that of the ancient city. Today Tyre is a peninsula joined to the mainland, the consequence of a series of silts and sediments deposited down the centuries on the mole built by Alexander the Great in the year 332 BC on the

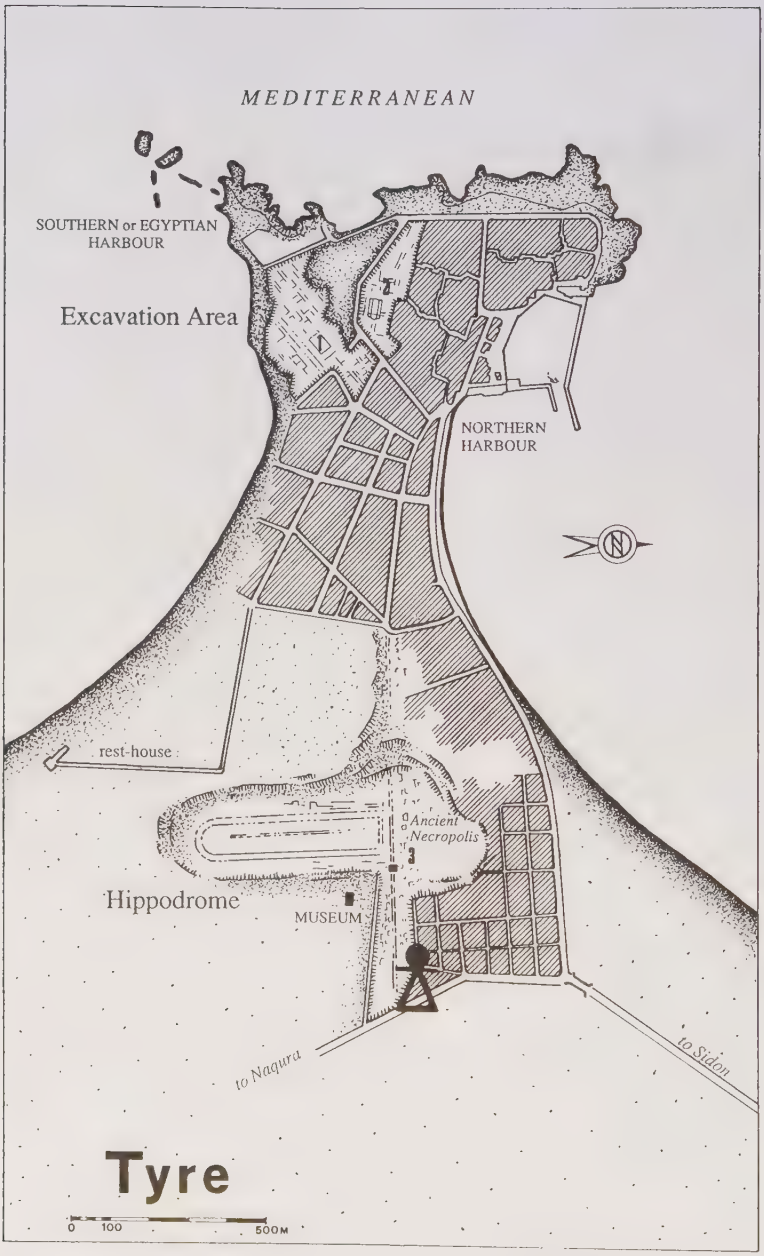


Fig. 8 Plan of Tyre. The Tanit symbol marks the site of the ancient necropolis

Fig. 9 Aerial view of Tyre in 1935

occasion of the siege of the city (Fig. 8). In antiquity, Tyre was an island 'in the midst of the sea' (Ezekiel 27:32). Legend tells that the city was founded on two rocks joined together by the roots of a sacred olive tree. According to Tyrian sources, Hiram I joined the two original islands in order to enlarge the city.

The strategic position of Tyre, at a safe distance from the coast and provided with lines of reefs to the north and south (Fig. 9), met the criteria demanded by the techniques of harbour building and seafaring in the pre-Roman period. Indeed, ancient ports were not so much built as hewn out of rocks and reefs so as to be protected against prevailing winds and tides and against possible attack from the sea. In the west, the Phoenician enclaves, set up for the most part on small islands and coastal promontories, merely reproduced on a smaller scale the model of the settlement at Tyre. The example which shows the most similarities with Tyre is Cadiz.

The description of the harbours at Tyre given by Arrian on the eve of the conquest by Alexander (Arr. 2:20, 10) coincides in broad outline with that of other classical writers (Strabo 16:2, 23). At Tyre, according to them, there were two harbours, one natural and the other artificial. The natural harbour was situated to the north of the city and

Fig. 10 Aerial view of Tyre in 1938

was an enclosed area inside the walls of Tyre. It was called the 'Sidonian' because it was aligned northwards towards Sidon. The artificial harbour was located to the south of the city and was built in the ninth century by Ithobaal I. It was called 'Egyptian' because it faced towards Africa and it was connected to the 'Sidonian harbour' by means of a canal across the city. This arrangement of the harbours and the existence of a communicating canal brings us back once more to the layout of Phoenician Cadiz, as will be seen later. The fact is that all the economic activity of Tyre was centred around its two harbours. 'Situated at the entry of the sea', sang the prophet (Ezekiel 27:3).

We do not know the exact extent of the island of Tyre. Pliny asserts that its perimeter measured 22 stadia (*Nat. Hist.* 5:76), some 4 km, although some recent estimates calculate that the island was 700–750 m wide, which would give an area for the island of roughly 53 hectares. In any case, it was a city of considerable size for the period (Fig. 10).

As for its population, the specialists agree that it was greater than that of modern Ṣur. It is reckoned that some 30,000 persons lived in Tyre, that is a density of 520 inhabitants per hectare – a density which could increase in times of war, when the residents of the mainland suburbs like Ushu took refuge on the island and raised the population to a figure in the region of 40,000 persons. These calculations are

based on accounts in Arrian, who reported that some 8,000 defenders fell during the siege by Alexander the Great. Another 30,000 survivors, including women and children, were made slaves by the Macedonians.

Various legendary traditions record that the most ancient temple of Melqart was not in Tyre, but in the city known as 'ancient Tyre', *Tyrus vetus* (Justinus, 11:10–11) or even *Palaeotyron* (Curcius Rufus, 4:2–4), situated on the mainland. From the city of Palaeotyre, not so far located but which has been identified with the modern village of Tell er-Rachidiyeh, came the supply of drinking water for Tyre. The water was carried to the island of Tyre in small boats up until the time of Hiram I, who built cisterns and other engineering works on the island. It is said, moreover, that the first human settlement on the island, during the Bronze Age, came from Palaeotyre on the mainland.

The Egyptian and Assyrian texts call Palaeotyre *Ushu* (Fig. 11). It was considered to be a second Tyre on the mainland and lasted as a satellite city until it was conquered by Nebuchadnezzar. The Book of Samuel is probably referring to Ushu (II, 24:6–7) when it mentions the 'fortress' from which Tyre was able to control all the territory as far as Akhziv in the south, that remained outside the frontiers of the kingdom of David.

A river, the Ras el-'Ain, crossed Palaeotyre at its mouth, recalling once again the topography of the enclaves in the south of the Iberian Peninsula.

To the island of Tyre, overpopulated as it was, its mainland territory was a vital necessity. Consisting of an extensive, exceedingly fertile plain, it supplied the city with agricultural products, drinking water, wood and murex. In isolation, the city was nothing.

With the help of successive descriptions of ancient Tyre that have been preserved, and thanks to various representations of the city in Assyrian art, it is possible today to reconstruct the original appearance of the 'greatest and most glorious' city of the Levantine coast (Curcius Rufus 4:2, 2).

In the matter of its architecture and layout, we know that Hiram built the three major temples of the city – those of Melqart, Astarte and Baal Shamem – and that there was a big marketplace close to the harbour. We know, too, about the royal palace, erected in the south-west corner of the city (Arrian 2:23, 6), within whose walls the royal treasures and archives were preserved (Ezekiel 28:4).

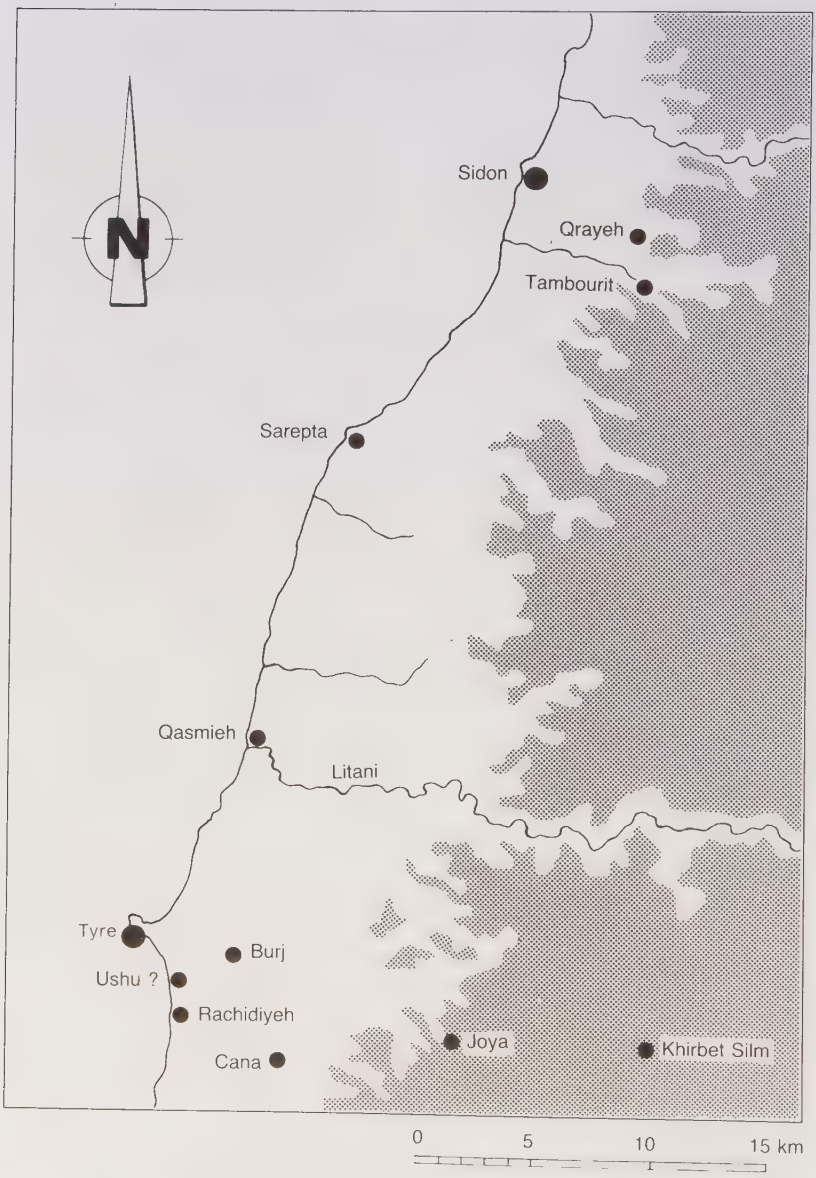


Fig. 11 Southern Phoenicia and the territory of Tyre

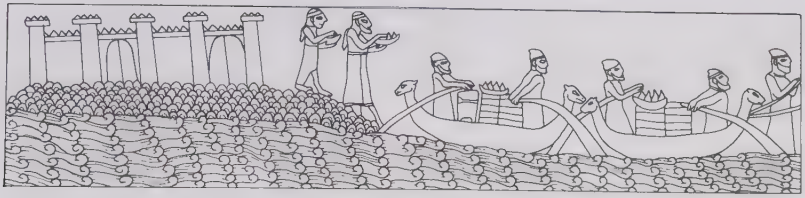


Fig. 12 The island of Tyre: bronze bas-relief from the gates of Balawat (ninth century BC)

The most ancient representation of the city of Tyre to have been preserved is in the form of a bronze bas-relief on the gates at Balawat, dated to the middle of the ninth century BC, in which Tyre is shown on its rocky island, surrounded by a wall with five towers (Fig. 12). Two gates in the wall, with arches, might represent access respectively to the two harbours of the city. As for the elevation of the wall of Tyre, it is reported that, on its eastern side, it reached a height of 45 m (Arrian 2:21, 4).

In another bas-relief, in stone, from the first quarter of the eighth century BC, discovered in the palace of Sargon II in Khorsabad, we see a maritime scene, in which ships are transporting stout trunks of cedarwood against a background in which can be discerned two islands close to the coast. The one on the right is Tyre and the one on the left might be Arvad (Fig. 13). Here again, Tyre is represented on a rocky island, protected by massive fortifications. Its three main temples stand out above the walls. Once again it evokes the image of Tyre compared to a great ship 'fortified in the midst of the sea' (Ezekiel 27:32).

Undoubtedly the most evocative representation known to us is in an Assyrian bas-relief, now lost, which adorned the palace of Sennacherib in Nineveh. Thanks to an unpublished drawing, Barnett was able to identify and reconstruct the scene, which would be dated to around 690 BC (Fig. 14).

The bas-relief shows the flight of King Luli of Tyre in the year 701 BC before the Assyrian armies. The king is seen boarding a ship with his family, maybe in the 'Egyptian harbour', which will carry him safely to exile on the island of Cyprus. In front of the city, a flotilla of bulky, rounded ships awaits the king – galleys or merchant ships – escorted by more elongated warships. People have claimed to see in this scene a reproduction of the famous 'ships of Tarshish'.

Fig. 1 : Phoenician ships; in the background the islands of Tyre and Arvad. Bas-relief at the palace of Sargon II in Khorsabad (eighth century BC)

In the background can be seen the city of Tyre. Various buildings can be distinguished, rising behind the walls and towers of the city. Above an arched gate on the left of the wall towers an important building with a cornice, the main entrance of which is flanked by two great pillars or isolated columns with voluted capitals. In all probabil

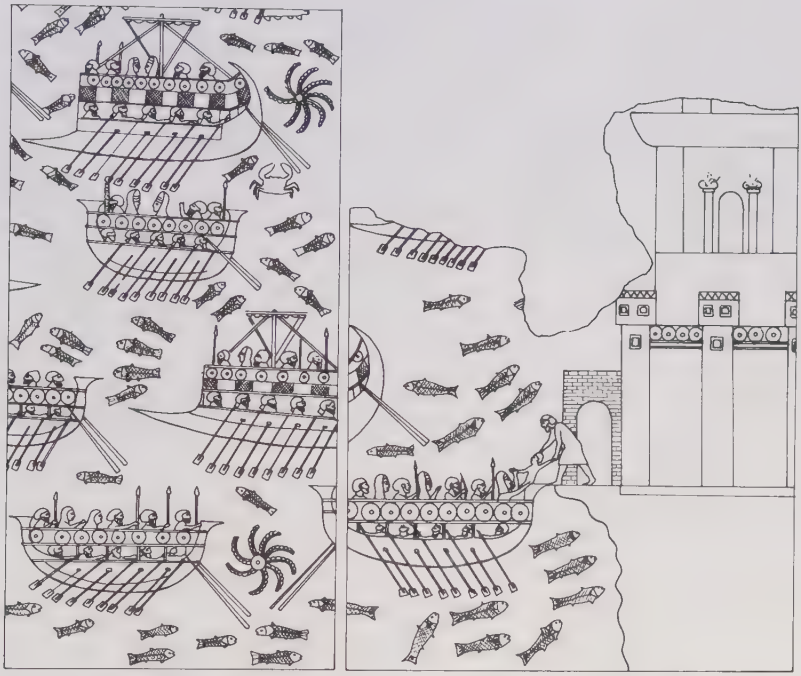


Fig. 14 Flight of king Luli of Tyre. Assyrian bas-relief from Khorsabad, early seventh century BC

ity we have here a representation of the great temple of Melqart and its twin columns of gold and emerald (Herod. 2:44).

ARCHAEOLOGY OF TYRE AND ITS TERRITORY

A stratigraphic sondage of 150 m^2, directed by Bikai in the highest district of Tyre in 1973–74, has been decisive for comparing data from written documentation with empirical or archaeological information. For the first time, an excavation in Tyre itself made it possible to record one of the few sequences of archaeological material so far obtained in Phoenicia. Moreover, the considerable volume of pottery found in the excavation has formed an invaluable instrument of analysis when re-examining Phoenician material from the Iberian Peninsula and the west.

Bikai's excavation has made it clear that the island was in almost uninterrupted occupation from the Early Bronze Age. This has been one of the surprises furnished by the excavation since, up until then, it

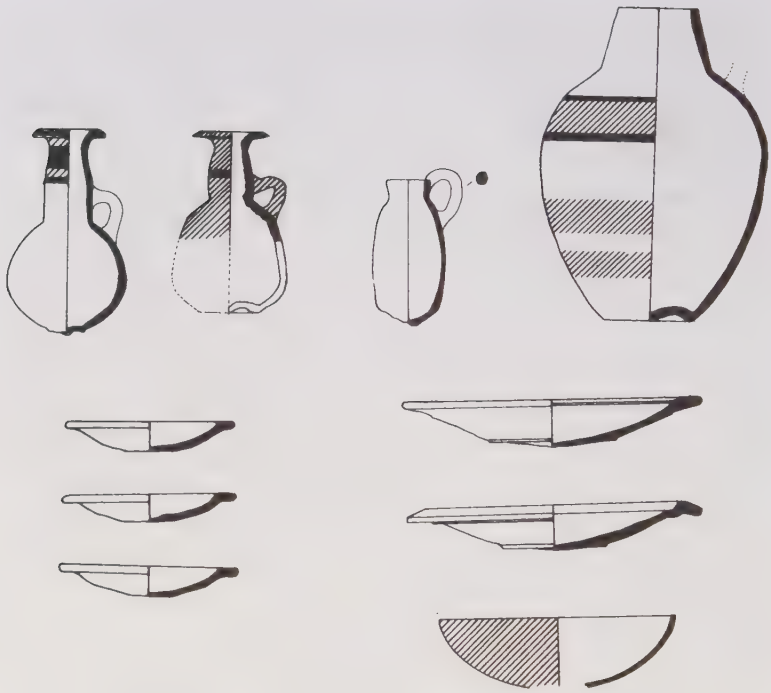


Fig. 15 Pottery from Tyre, eighth century BC

had been thought that Tyre had not flourished before the reign of Hiram I. The rich occupation levels from the Early Bronze Age (strata XXVII–XIX), dated to 2900–2500 BC, show considerable civic activity and architecture comparable to that of other great Canaanite cities of the period.

Archaeology indicates that the island of Tyre was abandoned all through the Middle Bronze Age, that is between approximately 2000 and 1600. Perhaps the population transferred to Ushu on the mainland during this period.

During the Late Bronze Age, between 1650 and 1050 BC, Tyre was inhabited again (strata XVIII–XIV). During this stage, a spectacular boom occurred in the purple cloth industry, judging by the find of hosts of shells of *Murex brandaris* and *Murex trunculus*. At the end of the Late Bronze Age (strata XV–XIV), evidence of decline is observed and an interruption of industrial activities, but there is no sign of the violent destruction seen in other cities of the period.

The occupation strata corresponding to the Iron Age (strata XIII–I) reflect extraordinary building activity and a thriving pottery industry, particularly in strata IX–VI of the excavation (850–800 BC). On top of this industrial district, in the years 760–740 BC (strata V–IV), great buildings of a monumental character were erected. After level I, dated to around 700 BC, the archaeological levels appear to be destroyed by Roman constructions, which is why there is absolutely no documentation about Middle Iron Age II (725–550 BC) or the Late Iron Age (530–330 BC).

The most interesting levels, naturally enough, consist of strata IV to I and, in particular, the Tyre III–II horizon, dated to 740–700 BC, chiefly for their pottery which is almost identical to that from the earliest levels of occupation in the Phoenician settlements of southern Spain. The most significant types of pottery from strata IV–I are the mushroom-lipped jugs, the trilobial-lipped jugs, the lamp with a single wick, the plates with a distinct rim, the tripods and the bowls (Fig. 15). They are the same shapes as we find, for example, in stratum I at Toscanos or Chorreras in Malaga. Neither in Carthage nor in the west in general are there at present any pottery finds earlier than the types characteristic of stratum IV in Tyre, dated to around 750 BC.

In addition, red-glazed monochrome pottery – the kind documented in Andalusia – begins to predominate from the middle of the eighth century BC, the time when this type replaces the earlier bichrome material we had noted in Khaldé and other funerary nuclei of Middle Iron I.

Among other finds in the Tyre sondage, a protogeometric Greek vase, dated to the tenth century BC, and a Cycladic plate from stratum X and dated to 850 BC are outstandingly important for their chronology and its implications. The first constitutes one of the earliest Greek imports so far discovered in Phoenicia and would coincide with the beginning of Tyre's commercial expansion in the period of Hiram I.

In 1990, in the area of the city's Romano-Byzantine necropolis, a sector of the ancient necropolis of the ninth and eighth centuries BC (Fig. 16) was discovered. Situated on the mainland facing the ancient island of Tyre, it has yielded a host of cremation urns, which were accompanied by red-slip jugs and other funerary offerings (Fig. 17). The presence in that area of a few Late Bronze Age burials, dated to the fifteenth to fourteenth centuries BC, indicates that the principal necropolis of the city was probably situated at the extreme eastern end

Fig. 16 Roadway from the Roman period in Tyre, near the Romano-Byzantine necropolis

Fig. 17 Eighth-century cinerary urn from the necropolis in Tyre

of the Roman necropolis, in an area set aside for burials from the second millennium BC until the mediaeval period.

On the mainland at Tyre, several necropolises from the beginning of the Middle Iron Age have been identified. Perhaps the most important of all is the one at Tell er-Rachidiyeh, discovered in 1975 and lying 4 km south of Alexander's famous mole. Because of its position, then,

it must be associated with the city of Ushu or Palaeotyre. This necropolis has both inhumations and cremations, although the latter predominate during the eighth century BC. The great collective hypogea cut into the rock predominate there and outstanding among them is number IV, containing twenty-three bichrome amphorae, remains of cremations and a considerable number of jugs, plates, scarabs and stone weights from the ninth to eighth centuries BC. The graves consist of a shaft, square or circular in section, dug into the ground and approached by one or two steps. The shaft ends in one or two hollows, where the cinerary urns and grave goods were deposited.

Other necropolises situated close to Tyre or in its immediate hinterland are Qasmieh, Joya and Khirbet Silm. The last two contain equal numbers of inhumations and cremations; the one at Qasmieh has cremations exclusively. In these graves, the painted bichrome pottery stands out, with its decoration of painted red bands outlined in black; these outnumber the classic red-glazed ware.

Tyre forms the centre of a very large region, as can be inferred from various finds that place the northern limit of the territory at Kherayeb, some 10 km to the north of the city, its eastern limit a score of kilometres away at Khirbet Silm, and its southern frontier at Umm el-Amed, 20 km to the south of Tyre. The existence of numerous secondary settlements at Qana and Siddiqin reveals as well that the state capital dominated a rural hinterland of enormous agricultural potential; this runs counter to some recent theories which see in the shortage of land for cultivation one of the causes of Tyrian colonization in the Mediterranean. Tyre's hinterland was to fulfil a vital function for the economy of the city during the Iron Age, a period which, unlike the second millennium, is marked by the expansion of agriculture into ever more arid and mountainous regions and an increasing tendency to look on the land and the labour force engaged in agriculture as a commodity.

HIRAM I AND THE FOUNDING OF TYRE'S COMMERCIAL EMPIRE

During the tenth century, a number of circumstances in the Near East would create a situation favourable to any state with commercial and territorial aspirations that was capable of making skilful use of the enormous possibilities that were opening up.

Indeed, the downturn in Egypt's political power on the one hand, the defeat of the Philistines at the hands of David in 975, the political

unification of Israel, the still precarious situation of the Aramaic kingdoms in Syria and the immobility of the Assyrian empire in the east brought about conditions that were optimal for an ambitious state which, like Tyre, had no ties of dependence with the outside world, in particular with Egypt. From then on and throughout almost three hundred years, the policy of Tyre would consist in exploiting to its own advantage the diverse situations offered by the geo-political landscape of western Asia. Throughout the whole of the Middle Iron Age (900–550 BC), this strategy would make Tyre the foremost naval and commercial power in Asia.

Hiram I, the founder of Tyre's commercial empire, owed his prestige above all to his politico-commercial relations with Solomon. Hiram is credited with achieving a monopoly of the sea transport of the period (II Chron. 8:18), the naval power of his city and her hegemony over the Phoenician coast in the teeth of her rivals, Byblos and Sidon, which is why Hiram called himself 'king of Tyre and of Phoenicia'.

His commercial policy consisted exclusively in controlling the trade routes of the Asian continent. This enterprise was undoubtedly helped by the policy of growth and expansion of the kingdom of Israel during the reign of Solomon (960–930 BC). A first stage in Tyre's expansionist line was opened with the famous commercial treaty signed by Hiram I and Solomon, by virtue of which the two monarchs agreed to engage in large-scale commercial transactions. In return for advanced technology, building material, specialist technical assistance, services and luxury goods supplied by Hiram, Solomon provided Tyre with silver, farm products and 'food for the royal household' (I Kings 5:11). The alliance with Solomon secured access for Tyre to the routes of the interior leading to the Euphrates, Syria, Mesopotamia and Arabia and guaranteed both a supply of cereals, so lacking in her territory, and, at the same time, an outlet for her manufactured products. Territorial aspirations on the mainland were a constant preoccupation and necessity for the monarchs of Tyre.

The second stage in Hiram's expansionist policy coincides with the organization of a joint naval enterprise with Israel, aimed at opening up a new market: the Orient. The biblical texts describe how, on the initiative of Tyre, Solomon and Hiram built a merchant fleet at Eziongeber, near Elath on the Red Sea (I Kings 9). Their ships, manned by the Phoenicians, were the 'ships of Tarshish' (I Kings 10:22 and 49) which sailed every three years to a distant country, Ophir, and brought back gold, silver, ivory and precious stones. The destination of these

voyages is generally located on the west coast of the Red Sea (Sudan or Somalia), in the Yemen, or even in the Indian Ocean. What is certain is that the Old Testament invariably refers to the east, which is why the hypothesis that the destination of these voyages might have been the south of the Iberian peninsula has been definitively discarded nowadays. The similarity observed in the first two syllables of the words Tarshish and Tartessos does not, at present, justify distorting the whole of Hiram's commercial policy, which was clearly orientated towards the continents of Africa and Asia.

The development of the Phoenicio–Israelite naval enterprise in the Red Sea is, above all, a demonstration of the fact that, during the tenth century BC, Tyre was already capable of organizing long-distance maritime expeditions and possessed a naval technology that was adequate for voyaging directly to any destination without the support of intermediaries. But the most important thing about the enterprise of Hiram and Solomon is that it provides confirmation that the Phoenicians were able, for the first time, to have direct access to the gold-producing countries, breaking the traditional Egyptian monopoly of the sources of supply in the Red Sea and the Yemen, a monopoly on which the whole of western Asia had been dependent during the Late Bronze Age. Direct access to the metal-producing countries without the need for intermediaries was one of the achievements of Hiram I which, free of the political and technological barriers that had existed in the eastern Mediterranean during the Late Bronze Age, allowed the monarchs of Tyre not only to increase their profits, but also gradually to widen their commercial sphere of influence.

Through the biblical texts and those of Flavius Josephus, we know that Hiram and Solomon made considerable profits from their naval expeditions, profits that they spent on embellishing their respective capitals, in an obvious desire to express their political power. With the help of Tyrian architects, Solomon built the temple in Jerusalem. To Hiram, on the other hand, is attributed the rebuilding of the harbour of Tyre, with the addition of mighty shipyards, the extension of the city by joining the two islands together, the building of the royal palace and market and the reconstruction of her temples. He was responsible likewise for building the great temple of Melqart, the tutelary deity of the city, which would become famous for its two great pillars of gold and emerald. The civic activities of this monarch transformed Tyre into undoubtedly the most splendid and envied city of the Levantine coast, 'beautiful and perfect', in the words of Ezekiel.

Various reports mention a direct intervention by Hiram in Cyprus to stifle an uprising of the 'kiti(um)'. This suggests the possibility that control of the eastern Mediterranean through its sovereignty at sea and over the east coast of the island was among Tyre's objectives. It suggests, likewise, that Tyre had certain political rights over Cyprus. In any case, this strategy would not bear fruit until the reign of Hiram's successors, with the founding of the first Tyrian colony in Cyprus, Kition, in the middle of the ninth century.

At the end of the tenth century, the immediate successors of Hiram I were to witness important changes in the political situation in western Asia. These changes – the division of Solomon's kingdom into two states, Judah and Israel, and the rise of the Aramaic states in the north – would oblige Tyre to reorientate her commercial policy. This first adjustment opened the way to a new Phoenician 'golden age', thanks to the figure of Ithobaal I.

THE COMMERCIAL STRATEGY OF TYRE DURING THE NINTH CENTURY

The reign of Ethbaal or Ithobaal I (887–856 BC) marks the beginning of Tyre's genuine territorial expansion into the continent of Asia. With this monarch, too, the sovereign of Tyre began for the first time to call himself 'king of the Sidonians', as recorded in Homer and in the Old Testament (1 Kings 16:31).

The new title assumed by the kings of Tyre is the result of the expansionist intentions of Ithobaal, who was to succeed in re-establishing his dominion over all the southern territory of Phoenicia. Ithobaal created a single state that embraced both Tyre and Sidon. From that moment until the end of the eighth century BC, this new territorial confederation, with its capital in Tyre, would be governed by the royal house of Tyre. Proof that there was a single state of Tyre–Sidon in the ninth and eighth centuries BC – 'the united kingdom of Canaan' mentioned by Isaiah (23:1–14) – is the fact that during that time Sidon disappears from the Assyrian inscriptions and that the two cities develop one single policy under the sovereignty of a single monarch residing in Tyre.

Equally significant is the fact that during this period oriental sources mention for the first time the founding of Tyrian colonies. Indeed Ithobaal I is credited with the establishment of two colonial enclaves, at Auza in Libya and Botrys to the north of Byblos. Although the

colony at Auza has not been identified, the one at Botrys corresponds to the modern Batrun near Byblos, right in Giblite territory, which would seem to imply that Byblos and its immediate surroundings were under the dominion of Tyre. Once again, the evidence supports the notion of clear territorial aspirations in the continent on the part of Tyre, aspirations we shall see increasing throughout the ninth century BC.

The dominant role of Tyre in the commercial sphere in Asia prompted Ithobaal I to seek new sources of raw materials and gradually to control the market through an ever more active and simultaneous presence on three fronts: Israel, Syria and the east coast of Cyprus.

As regards Israel, the policy of Tyre consisted in consolidating diplomatic and trading relations with the new neighbour through marriage alliances. Thus Ithobaal's daughter, the Jezebel of the Bible, married the king of Israel, Ahab (874–853 BC), and was held responsible by the prophets, and Elijah in particular, for introducing the abominable worship of Baal into Samaria, the new capital of the kingdom (I Kings 16:31). Undoubtedly all the diplomatic activities initiated by Ithobaal I were directed towards obtaining basic foodstuffs and acquiring access to the trade routes of the interior.

The hostility with which the Hebrew prophets received Jezebel and the apostate Ahab reflects the uneasiness produced in Israel by the growing Phoenician influence on its institutions. Archaeology confirms that that influence was not simply ideological. During the ninth century BC we can document the presence of Phoenician architects and craftsmen in Samaria, Hazor and Megiddo. In Samaria itself, the Phoenician influence would persist until the destruction of the city in 721 BC. In addition, there is evidence that a Tyrian business area existed in the town centre (II Kings 3:2) and various archaeological finds (of 'Samarian pottery', for example) point to the presence of Phoenician craftsmen in the royal palace of Ahab and his successors.

In the royal palace of Samaria pieces of ivory have been discovered which were intended to ornament furniture and were carved and decorated by Phoenician craftsmen (Fig. 18). It is said that Solomon's ivory throne had been the work of artists from Tyre (I Kings 10:18). It is worth pointing out in this connection that both Homer and the biblical texts are unanimous in considering carved ivory as an article of luxury and social prestige (Ezekiel 27:6) or as synonymous with ostentation, power and corruption (*Od.* 19:565). The Old Testament refers explicitly to the 'ivory house' of Ahab in Samaria and reproaches the men of

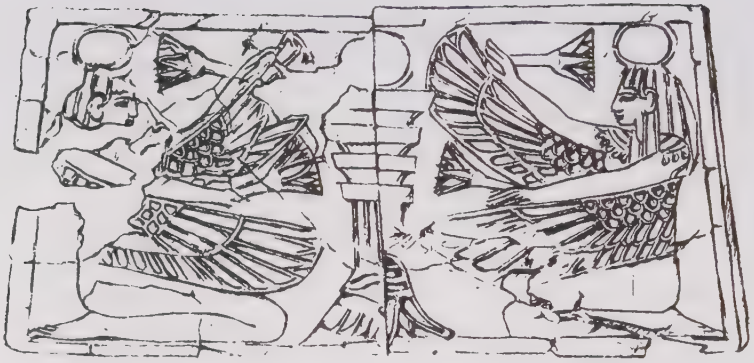


Fig. 18 Phoenician ivory from the royal palace of Samaria (eighth century BC)

Samaria with 'lying on beds of ivory' (1 Kings 22:39; Amos 3:15 and 6:4). Worked ivory is one of the products of Phoenician craftsmanship that brought the most renown to its commerce, especially in the eighth and seventh centuries BC. In archaeological terms, these pieces appear, with rare exceptions, only in royal palaces in the Near East (Nimrud, Khorsabad), in princely tombs of the Mediterranean (Salamina, Praeneste) or in the big Hellenic sanctuaries.

The presence of such prestige objects in the royal palace in Samaria highlights one of the mechanisms of exchange most characteristic of Tyre's commercial strategy: the reciprocal exchange of gifts between princes and monarchs to mark the beginning of more widespread transactions. Included, naturally, within these norms of reciprocity was matrimonial exchange.

There is plenty of evidence for the trade between Phoenicia and Israel during the ninth and eighth centuries BC. Phoenicia continued to import agricultural produce from Israel in exchange for luxury goods and metal articles, which have been found mostly in Samaria, Megiddo and Hazor. Regular finds in Tyre of a type of Israelite amphora with a cylindrical body and a capacity of some 16–24 litres (Fig. 19) reflect an intense trade in grain and other agricultural produce from the Hazor region, as shown by the physico-chemical analyses carried out on these containers.

The second front to which the political interests of Tyre were directed during the ninth century BC consisted of the northern territories of Syria and Cilicia. In antiquity, the north of Syria, and particu-

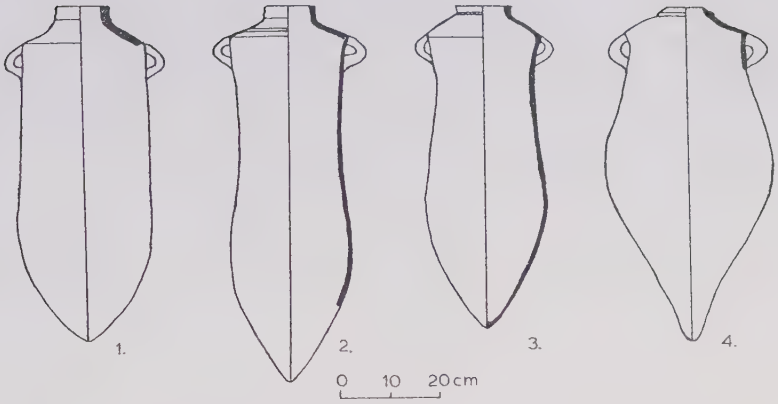


Fig. 19 Israelite amphorae from Tyre

larly the coastal territory on the gulf of Alexandretta, was an important crossing point of communication routes and gave relatively easy access to almost the whole of western Asia. Nevertheless, for the Phoenicians, the main attraction of the gulf lay in control of the access routes to the rich metal deposits in southeast Anatolia by way of the marts or trading posts of Tarsus, in Cilicia, of Sam'al (Zinjirli), Karatepe, Carchemish and Aleppo.

Already in the tenth century BC, Solomon was acquiring horses and carriages all the way from Cappadocia and Cilicia, probably through Phoenician intermediaries. This leads us to envisage a direct interest on the part of Hiram I in supplying this market. However, it is in the ninth century BC that a real presence of Tyre in this territory is recorded.

The Assyrian annals mention a Phoenician harbour installation at Myriandros, near the modern Iskanderun, on the gulf of Alexandretta. The installation controlled access to Cilicia and the Euphrates. Furthermore, in the time of Salmanasar III (858–824 BC), the Assyrian texts mention the presence of Tyrians, maybe a commercial agency, on the banks of the Euphrates.

The Phoenician presence in Cilicia and in the north of Syria during the ninth century BC is confirmed by archaeological and epigraphic documentation. In addition to the discovery of Phoenician pottery at, among other places, Carchemish and Tell Halaf, the most significant archaeological documents are the Phoenician inscriptions. Outstanding among them is the stele of king Kilamuwa (850–825 BC), the ruler of Zinjirli, capital

of the neo-Hittite kingdom of Sam'al. The inscription, dated to 830 BC, is written in the Phoenician language, which must be significant in a territory whose official language was Hittite or Aramaic.

Another stele comes from the vicinity of Aleppo, is dated to the second half of the ninth century BC and dedicated to Melqart, the god of Tyre, by Bar-Hadad, king of Aram or the Aramaic people. Even though the inscription is in Aramaic, it is addressed to the god of Tyre by a Syrio-Hittite king, which suggests that there may have been a Phoenician sanctuary in the area. The presence of Melqart would thus imply political tutelage on the part of Tyre and her monarch over this territory.

Somewhat later and dated to the eighth century BC are the bilingual inscriptions – in Hittite hieroglyphics and in Phoenician – at Karatepe, erected by the founder of the city, Azitawadda. Situated some 30 km from Zinjirli, the fortress of Karatepe controlled the routes leading from Cilicia to northern Syria and was the capital of one of the most powerful Anatolian or neo-Hittite kindoms of eastern Cilicia. Another strategic enclave, the neo-Hittite city of Carchemish, shows Phoenician influences in its architecture and craftwork. In the time of Tiglatpileser III (745–727 BC), the Assyrian annals still mention the presence of Phoenicians there (see Fig. 2).

There can be no doubt that the use of Phoenician as an official language and the invocation of Melqart of Tyre by the rulers in northern Syria and Cilicia reflect a Phoenician political and cultural influence of some importance in this territory. Before the Aramaic language had become established in this region at the end of the ninth century BC, everything seems to indicate that the commercial interests of Tyre resulted in political pressure on the princes of the Aramaic and neo-Hittite city states. Thanks to a network of factorships and trading posts in place on the gulf of Alexandretta and the coastal region of Cyprus, Tyre was able to secure a monopoly of the trade in metals and slaves in Cilicia, the Taurus Mountains and the Euphrates and, at the same time, to control the sea routes to the Aegean.

Thus Tyre became a commercial power in the reign of Ithobaal and his successors. During the ninth century, Tyre extended her continental frontiers to limits never reached before, and this must necessarily have had repercussions on the appearance and internal organization of the city. The building of the city walls and of the second artificial harbour in the south of the island, the so-called 'Egyptian' harbour, are attributed to Ithobaal I.

In one of the bronze reliefs on the gates of Balawat, mentioned earlier, from the palace of Salmanasar III (in the mid-ninth century BC), Ithobaal is represented loading tributes for the king of Assyria into his ships (see Fig. 12). The ships, at anchor in the port, are carrying silver, gold, bronze and purple cloth:

> I received the tribute from the boats
> of the people of Tyre and Sidon.

So says the inscription of Salmanasar III on the bronze doors of his palace. He is alluding, no doubt, to the metals, and in particular the silver, coming perhaps even then from the west.

The most outstanding of Ithobaal's direct successors is Pygmalion (820–774 BC). During his reign the city of Tyre is mentioned for the second time in the oriental sources in connection with the founding of colonies. Tradition relates that, as the result of a crisis that arose between the king and the aristocracy of Tyre, Pygmalion's sister Elissa – the Latin Dido – found herself obliged to flee to the west where she founded Carthage in the year 814/813 BC.

During the second half of the ninth century BC, the steady advance of the Assyrian armies across the territories of northern Syria suggests a setback with disastrous consequences for Tyre's trade in that region. The campaigns of Asurnasirpal II and Salmanasar III against Syria coincide, moreover, with the growing power of the Aramaic kingdoms, all of which would oblige Tyre yet again to reorganize her commercial strategy.

As a consequence of the loss of the Syrian market at the end of the ninth century BC, two decisive events occurred almost simultaneously: the establishment of a Syrian trading centre in Al Mina, close to the mouth of the Orontes, and the founding of Kition by Tyre, which, as we shall now see, marks the turn towards the west in the economic and commercial policy of Tyre.

THE FOUNDING OF KITION AND TRADE IN THE AEGEAN

The island of Cyprus maintained contacts with Phoenicia from the second half of the eleventh century BC, as a few Phoenician finds from Palaeopaphos reveal. Some of the inscriptions found on the island suggest a possible Tyrian presence from the time of Hiram I, that is to say the tenth century BC and perhaps some kind of tutelage in the eastern part of the island.

These sporadic relations were transformed between the end of the ninth century and 600 BC into direct settlement of a Phoenician population in the southeast of the island, so that in practice the territory was incorporated into the kingdom of Tyre–Sidon. The territorial expansion of Tyre toward the west may quite likely date to around 820 BC, with the founding of Kition and the annexation of a part of southeast Cyprus. Moreover, Kition is the first Phoenician overseas colony confirmed by archaeology.

The founding of this colony arose probably from Tyre's need to secure at all costs the island's copper, a coveted metal at that period, which brought substantial profits to Cyprus, as well as giving the island its name. On the other hand, this event reflects an obvious change in Tyre's commercial strategy: for the first time the city finds itself obliged to develop direct control over an overseas territory. From the end of the ninth century BC, Tyre's new colony will guarantee to her monarch the commercial exploitation of the copper of the interior of the island and, in particular, the ore from the rich deposits at Tamassos.

Kition, close to Larnaka, was both a commercial port and a colony and was to take the place of the ancient Enkomi, one of the chief Cypriot cities of the second millennium BC, which enjoyed the advantage of an important natural harbour and its eminently strategic position. Not only was Kition one of the most important cities in Cyprus until the Hellenistic period, but it offers the advantage today of having provided a host of archaeological finds, outstanding among them the temple of Astarte, the largest Phoenician temple known at present (Fig. 20).

In a Cypriot inscription dated to 750 and originating in Limassol, a Phoenician governor acknowledges himself to be a servant of the royal house of Tyre and offers a dedication to Ba'al Labnán, that is, to the Baal of Lebanon. The title given to the offerer is that of governor of the city of *Qart-hadasht*, which in Phoenician means 'new city', 'new capital' or 'neapolis'. It is the same name that will be borne by the future new north African capital and will give us the word 'Carthage'. It is important to emphasize this fact because the name Qart-hadasht frequently seems to go with the Phoenician diaspora to the west as a synonym for the establishment of a 'new Tyre'.

We do not know where the Carthage in Cyprus was located; some authors identify it with this same Kition–Larnaka. In any case, the establishment of the new colony coincides with the arrival in the

Fig. 20 Aerial view of the temple of Astarte at Kition

island of Phoenician luxury imports, which appear in Paphos, Amathunte and Kurion. In the eighth and seventh centuries, the Phoenician influence in Cyprus would be considerable. The chambered tombs in the royal necropolis of Salamina, near Enkomi, have yielded many silver, bronze and ivory objects of Phoenician manufacture, which reflect the opulence and power of the local kings at the time the Phoenicians were establishing themselves on the island.

Within the new direction taken by Tyre's commercial policy in the ninth century BC, however, the founding of Kition is not an isolated case. Indeed, there are archaeological indications of the presence of Phoenician ships in the Aegean from the middle of the ninth century BC. The distribution of the first Phoenician imports in Greece indicates the sporadic presence of Phoenician merchants operating chiefly in Crete and the islands of the Aegean, rather than organized trade. But it is the kind of trade that is reflected in the Homeric epics (*Od.* 13:272–277).

From the second half of the ninth century BC, the ships of Tyre start to frequent Crete and the islands of the Dodecanese, thereby inaugurating a trade route into which they will be definitively integrated later, principally connected with Rhodes and Crete. We do not know what exactly the Phoencians obtained in exchange for jewels and bronzes, maybe slaves or silver from Laurion or Tasos. The important thing is to stress that the founding of Kition was accompanied by a first impulse towards establishing commercial exchanges with the west by sea and this is quite well confirmed by archaeology after 850 BC.

The find of a bronze bowl with a tenth-century-BC Phoenician inscription in the necropolis of Tekke at Knossos, and of a Phoenician sanctuary in Kommos, southern Crete, dated to 800–760 BC, denotes the presence of Phoenician traders on the island, sporadically at first and permanently later; it also shows the politico-commercial importance of this island in the interests of the Phoenician world in the Aegean.

ASSYRIAN TRIBUTARY POLICY AND PRESSURE ON TYRE IN THE EIGHTH AND SEVENTH CENTURIES BC

Until Asurnasirpal II (883–859 BC) came to power, around the year 879 BC, the Assyrian empire had not created major problems for the Phoenician cities. Tyre managed to remain on the fringes of the armed conflicts that brought Assyria up against the states of western Asia,

and preferred to pay tribute rather than confront the powerful Assyrian war machine. What is more, Tyre occasionally took advantage of the Assyrian advance to make the Mesopotamian monarchs her prime customers (Table 2).

In order to safeguard their economic interests and guarantee free trade, the Phoenician cities frequently found themselves forced to pay tribute to the neo-Assyrian empire. The story and the volume of the tributes paid by Tyre are recorded in the Assyrian annals of the day, allowing us to define the type of merchandise channelled by the Phoenician city and to get a rough idea of the prosperity of her port.

The tribute paid to Asurnasirpal II by Tyre consisted of gold, silver, tin, linen, monkeys, ebonite, and wooden and ivory chests. Salmanasar III (858–824 BC) received silver, gold, lead, bronze, wool dyed purple, ivory and drinking vessels. Lastly, Tyre paid Adad-Nirari III (810–783 BC) and Tiglatpileser III (745–727) huge quantities of iron, ivory and purple cloth.

The growing power of the Assyrian Empire made the Phoenician cities a key factor in the international politics of the seventh and sixth centuries BC. Their strategic position and their political and economic importance conditioned to a considerable extent the balance of power between Assyria and its great rival, Egypt. Hence the interest of the Assyrian monarchs in controlling the Phoenician ports and their commercial networks.

Until the middle of the eighth century BC, the Assyrian kings did nothing that might harm Phoenician commercial interests, nor did they intervene in their internal affairs. They restricted themselves to collecting tributes from the Phoenician cities or exploiting differences and any lack of solidarity between them, as Salmanasar III did.

Genuine political and military pressure on the Phoenician cities and the first direct opposition to their trade began with Tiglatpileser III, the first sovereign to wage war on Phoenicia, making part of the Phoenician coast into an Assyrian province (Fig. 21). The intervention of Assyria in the economic affairs of the Phoenician ports marks the beginning of a particularly critical period for Tyre's trade.

The chief consequences of Tiglatpileser III's campaigns against Urartu, Damascus and their allies were the deportation of hundreds of citizens to Assyria, the capture of Arvad and the surrender of Tyre and Damascus. In all this, the posture taken by Tyre is more than significant. Although her ruler, Hiram II (739–730 BC), together with the king of Aram-Damascus, had headed an anti-Assyrian coalition, Tyre

Table 2. *Kings of Tyre, Assyria and Israel*

Assyria	Israel	Tyre	Colonies
Tiglatpileser I	Judges		Gadir
1114–1076	1200–1020		Utica
Asur-rabi	Saul		Lixus
c. 1001			
	David	Abibaal	
Tiglatpileser II	Solomon	Hiram I	
965–933	960–930	969–936	
Asurdan II		Baal-eser I	
932–913	Jeroboam	935–919	
	Nadab		
Adad-Nirari II		Abdastrato	
911–891	Zimri	918–910	
Tukulti-Ninurta II	Omri	Ithobaal I	
889–884		887–856	
	Ahab		Botrys
Asurnasirpal II			Auza
883–859	Ahaziah	Baal-azor II	
		855–830	
Salmanasar III	Joram		
858–824			
		Mattan II	
Samsi-Adad V	Jehu	829–821	
824–810			Kition
	Joacaz	Pygmalion	
Adad-Nirari III		820–774	Carthage
810–783	Joash		
Salmanasar IV	Jeroboam II		
782–772		Ithobaal II	
Asurdan III	Zechariah	750–740	
772–754			
Asur-Nirari V			
754–746		Hiram II	
Tiglatpileser III	Menahem	739–730	
745–727		Mattan II	
Salmanasar V	Isaiah	730–729	
727–722			

Table 2. (*cont.*)

Assyria	Israel	Tyre	Colonies
Sargon II 722–705	Hosea ———	Elulaios 729–694	
Sennacherib 705–681		Baal I 680–640	
Asarhadon 681–670			
Asurbanipal 668–626			
Asur-etililani 626–612			
Sin-sar-iskun 621–612		Ithobaal III	
Asurubalit II 612–609	Ezekiel	Baal II Mattan III Hiram III	

was not incorporated into the Assyrian province, submitted swiftly to the king of Assyria, and lost only some of her territory in the interior.

In short, Tyre not only received special treatment on the part of Tiglatpileser III but she consolidated her trading positions in Cyprus and overseas.

The favourable treatment meted out by Assyria to the king of Tyre can only be explained by a need to foster common interests. During the eighth century BC, Assyria was not in a position to take Tyre's place in maritime trade, so it was very much in her interest to enable the latter to continue her operations, as it no doubt helped to keep the imperial finances in a healthy condition. Tyre managed to safeguard her trade and her role as an intermediary, although at the cost of abandoning other Phoenician cities like Arvad and Byblos to their fate. However, Tyre paid a very heavy price. From 734 BC, Assyria insisted on the presence of inspectors and customs officials in the port of Tyre and, shortly after, received from King Mattan II a tribute of 150 talents of gold, a sum never before equalled in any collection of tribute from Phoenicia.

The reign of Elulaios, or Luli, in Tyre (729–694 BC) brought a

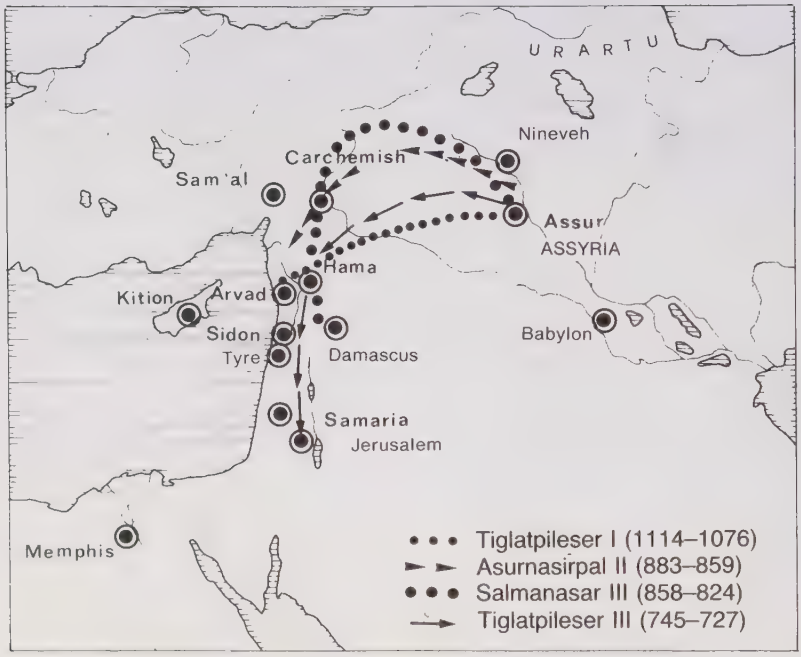


Fig. 21 The Assyrian campaigns in the Near East

momentary lull in the conflicts that put the coastal cities at loggerheads with Assyria. At that time, Tyre possessed the most powerful navy in Asia. But Elulaios had to suppress a rebellion in the cities of Kition, Ushu, Sidon and Akko. The anti-Assyrian policy of Luli led to confrontation successively with Salmanasar V (727–722 BC), Sargon II (722–705 BC) and lastly with Sennacherib (705–681 BC). One of the consequences of all this was the siege of Tyre by Salmanasar which lasted five years, from 724 to 720 BC. During that time, the Assyrian king blockaded the port, cut the water supply and forced up the prices of basic necessities.

With Sargon II, Assyrian policy underwent a change which would have grave repercussions for Tyre. This monarch did not just pressurize or annex territories as his predecessors had done, he initiated a systematic strategy of destruction, devastation, mass deportations and repopulation of the conquered territories, chiefly in Phoenicia and Israel. Even so, Sargon always deliberately drew back from a final destruction of the island of Tyre.

This situation continued until the year 701, when King Luli, after rebelling against Sennacherib, was forced to flee to Kition, where he would die in exile. The year 701 marks the end of the powerful unified state of Tyre–Sidon. In a very little while, Tyre lost Sidon and the greater part of her mainland territory, and her inhabitants were deported to Nineveh. Meanwhile, the throne of Tyre passed into the hands of pro-Assyrian monarchs and governors, the rivalry between Sidon and Tyre once again being fanned from outside. This is the humiliated and beleaguered Tyre of which Isaiah sings in his famous oracle (Appendix II).

At the beginning of the seventh century BC, the kingdom of Tyre consisted solely of the city and its suburbs on the mainland. It was a tiny state confronting a gigantic empire in its phase of maximum territorial expansion. The treaty signed by Baal I of Tyre, Luli's successor, and Asarhadon of Assyria (681–671 BC) is particularly interesting. In it, at a date between 675 and 671 BC, Tyre is granted complete freedom to trade with the north and the west. The clauses of the treaty are, nevertheless, humiliating for a city that had been the mistress of the sea. Indeed, the king's authority was considerably reduced because the treaty imposed Assyrian representatives in the affairs of the port and limited commercial shipping under threat of confiscation of the merchandise. All this undoubtedly obliged Tyre to strengthen the power and autonomy of some of her western colonies.

Successive blockades of Tyre at the hands of Asarhadon in 671–667 BC and Asurbanipal in 663 BC left the city more isolated than ever and in the worst crisis of its entire history. Around the year 640 BC, the entire mainland territory of Tyre was made into an Assyrian province. A reflection of this critical situation can be seen in the colonies of the west as well: this is the period when Carthage embarks on a policy of expansion on her own account, starting with the 'founding' of Ibiza in the year 654 BC. In spite of everything, Tyre was not destroyed like other Phoenician cities in the north and she even preserved a certain commercial and maritime autonomy in the eastern Mediterranean for a time. The foundation of the last known Tyrian trading post, Memphis, in the capital of Egypt, dates from the years 635–610 BC.

Meanwhile, a new power was beginning to threaten from the east: the neo-Babylonian empire. The Babylonian ruler, Nebuchadnezzar, after conquering Nineveh, Jerusalem and Damascus, laid siege to Tyre for thirteen years (585–572 BC). This time the siege of Tyre had catastrophic repercussions, as Ezekiel had prophesied. The king of Tyre,

Ithobaal II, was deported to Babylon and with his successor, Baal II, who died in 564 BC, the institution of the monarchy disappeared. In its place was imposed a government of 'judges' under the suzerainty first of Babylon and later of the Persian Empire. The heritage of Tyre's monarchic institution will be revived, however, in the west by Carthage.

This brings the history of Tyre to an end. During the sixth and fifth centuries BC, Sidon will take over her position in international trade and the ancient rival will become the most powerful and flourishing city in Phoenicia (Diodorus 16:44) until it is conquered by Alexander the Great.

PHOENICIAN IRON AGE ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeological information about the great Phoenician cities is almost non-existent, due to the uninterrupted occupation of the land right down to the present day. Nowadays, Beirut, Sidon and Tyre are still the chief cities of the Lebanon, which implies that Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Islamic cities are superimposed. This makes any extended excavation impossible. A historical reconstruction of the Phoenician cities from the archaeological record has been feasible only in less major centres – Sarepta, Akhziv, Tell-Abu Hawam – or on the basis of stratigraphic sondages in urban nuclei like Tyre, with all the attendant negative implications, namely a partial and restricted reading of the historical process.

Until a relatively short while ago, Phoenician material culture of the Iron Age was known to us in its principal manifestations – architecture, town planning, ceramics, gold work – basically through archaeological finds made in the west. The first reliable archaeological record was obtained in the colonies of the western Mediterranean. It is only a few years ago that the stratigraphic levels corresponding to Phoenician occupation in various sites on the Lebanese coast and in the Beqaa valley were reached. However, the majority of the systematic work undertaken since 1975 has been interrupted recently because of the war.

Hardly any archaeological remains from the Early Iron Age period in Phoenicia (1150–900 BC) are known. The greater part of the existing archaeological documentation is no earlier than Middle Iron 1 (900–725 BC) and comes chiefly from excavations of necropolises. Moreover, it must be born in mind that the earliest archaeological

material recorded in the west and in the Iberian Peninsula, particularly the pottery, corresponds without exception to the closing moments of that period in Phoenicia.

Let us look now at the main testimony provided by recent archaeology in Phoenician territory. For obvious reasons, we shall not concern ourselves here with the Late Iron Age period (600–300 BC) nor with later stages, because these lie outside the limits of the present study.

A reading of the most significant data from Phoenician settlements will undoubtedly facilitate an analysis of the centres in the Iberian Peninsula and help us to make a correct diagnosis of the archaeological record. Without taking into account the archaeological evidence from the country of origin, it would be futile to claim to define the characteristic features of the western colonies from a broader, more global perspective.

Tell Kazel and Tell Arqa

Of all the northern and central territory of Phoenicia, Byblos is undoubtedly the city most intensively excavated so far. In spite of that, this port settlement has not yielded a single indication relating to the occupation levels in the first millennium BC. The same is true of Arvad, a city situated on an island unknown in terms of the archaeological record.

Only one northern site, that of Tell Kazel, lying on the south Syrian coast and very near the Lebanese border, has yielded interesting archaeological levels of the Early Iron Age. This settlement is commonly identified with the ancient city of Simyra or Sumur, mentioned by Tutmosis III in the El Amarna letters and in the Assyrian annals. Together with Tell Arqa, it forms one of the great tells of the plain of Akkar and the depression of Homs, a strategic passage in communications between the coast and the Syrian interior. It is an imposing tell which has yielded important Late Bronze and Iron Age traces. Among the most significant data recorded at the site is the level of destruction documented at level 5 of area II, dated to around 1050 BC, the presence of eighth-century Tyrian pottery in level 8–9 and the find of neo-Assyrian ceramics in level 6, dated to 730–612 BC.

In neighbouring Tell Arqa, the ancient Arqata, a Middle Iron Age necropolis has recently been located and we have evidence of the great development experienced by this city between the late ninth and early seventh centuries BC. It lies 20 km to the north of Tripoli and the

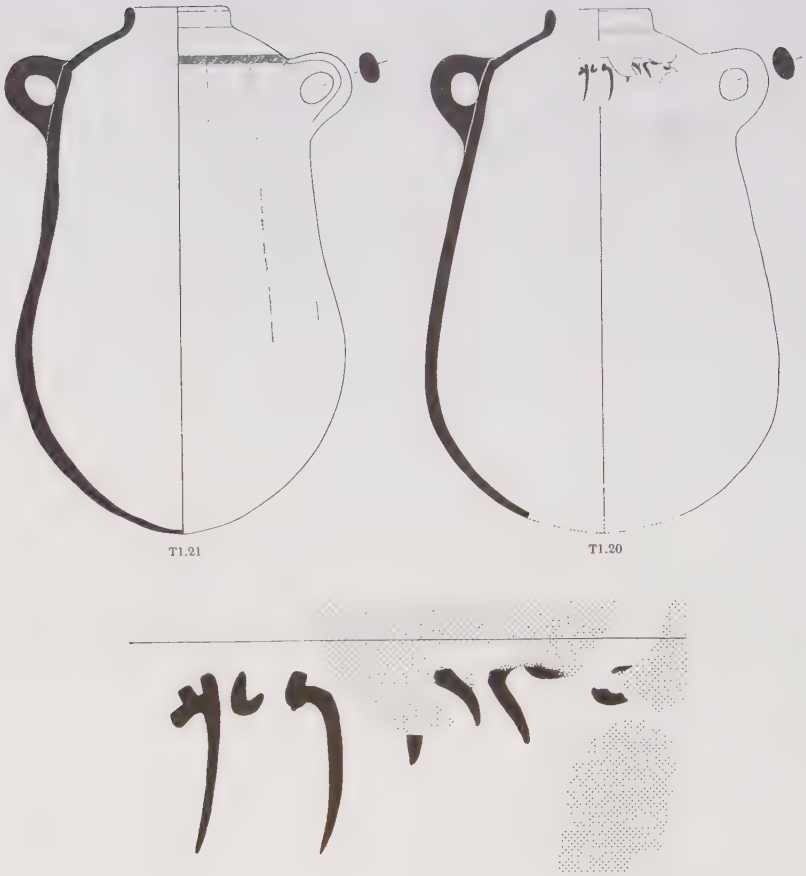


Fig. 22 Phoenician amphorae from Tell Arqa and an inscription painted on one of them

excavations of 1972–81 demonstrate that the site was occupied from the end of the Early Bronze Age till the fifteenth century BC (Middle Bronze II), when it was destroyed. The tell was reoccupied, starting in Iron Age II, during which a necropolis arose on the periphery of the city, made up of cremation burials in seventh- to fifth-century graves, in which the ashes were deposited directly on the bottom of the interment. Of all the burials, the most notable is tomb no. 1 in level 10, from the early seventh century, in which an amphora with a painted Phoenician inscription came to light (Fig. 22).

Al Mina and Tell Sukas

Together with Ras el-Bassit and Ras Ibn Hani, these are the only Iron Age settlements known on the coast of Syria. Lying strictly speaking outside the confines of northern Phoenicia, these two port settlements deserve special attention. Al Mina was established around 825 BC and was one of Syria's most important trading ports during the eighth century BC; thanks to its strategic position, in a very short time it came to dominate the great plain of Amuq and the trade routes to Cilicia, the Euphrates and Urartu. Al Mina was probably a key factor in the transmission of the alphabet and other eastern elements to Greece. Other similar enclaves, like Tell Sukas or Bassit, where an important Greek presence is reported, carried on centuries later the work initiated by trading ports like Al Mina at the end of the ninth century BC: the procurement of metals to supply the demands of the Greek world and which the Phoenician traders must already have been obtaining in the west. The archaeological evidence shows that at first in Al Mina Cypriot traders, Greeks and Phoenician residents from the south lived side by side. So the place must be defined as a neutral 'free port' in which the last Phoenician traders in Syria and the first Greek elements to settle in the Levant came together for a time.

An enclave with similar characteristics is Tell Sukas. In this port, situated on the Syrian coast a few kilometres south of Latakia, the Danish excavations of 1958–63 discovered an Iron Age centre on top of rich levels of Late Bronze Age occupation. The commercial activity of this port seems to start around the tenth century BC, according to what can be inferred from one inscription. The original name of the city was Suksi, founded, apparently, by Phoenicians. The colony was established in the centre of one of the most extensive and fertile plains of the Syrian coast, the plain of Djeble, on a hill lying between two excellent natural harbours.

In Tell Sukas, Early Iron Age necropolises have been excavated and also a *tophet,* or sacred precinct intended for human sacrifices, situated to the south of the city and dated to the thirteenth to tenth centuries BC. Outstanding among the finds from the Middle Iron Age are an abundance of Greco-Cypriot pottery and a Phoenician sanctuary of the seventh century BC of enormous proportions. From roughly 600 BC onwards, Sukas became definitively a place of permanent residence for eastern Greeks until the destruction of the port in 550 BC. This change is inferred from the absolute predominance of Ionian and Rhodian

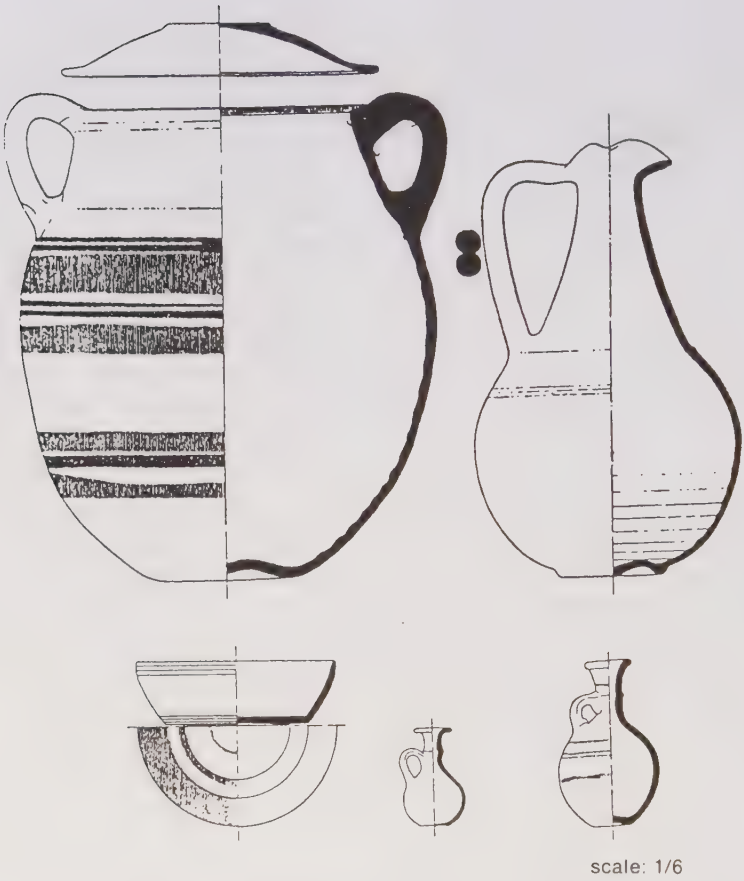


Fig. 23 Pottery from the necropolis at Khaldé

pottery, the presence of Greek burials and, lastly, the progressive hellenization of the old Phoenician sanctuary.

The necropolis of Khaldé

In the north-central area of Phoenicia, the third city in importance after Arvad and Byblos was Beirut. The building of the modern Lebanese capital on top of its archaeological levels makes access to the original Phoenician port of Berytus practically impossible. Nevertheless, in the years 1961–66 an extensive necropolis, that of Khaldé (Fig. 23), was excavated in its territory, for the present the

most important Iron Age funerary ensemble on the Phoenician coast. This necropolis, lying 12 km to the south of Beirut and alongside the motorway leading to the airport, has so far yielded more than 170 burials. The necropolis was used throughout two main periods: an early horizon dated between the tenth and late ninth centuries BC (Khaldé IV) and another, later, horizon, dated between the late ninth and late eighth centuries BC (Khaldé III). During period IV, the rite of inhumation in a pit or cyst predominated, while during the later period III, a few cremations appear, deposited in amphorae alongside the inhumations which form the majority.

The importance of the Khaldé necropolis lies not so much in its size as in the data it has provided about Phoenician funerary practices, Middle Iron Age pottery styles and, in particular, Phoenician social organization. These data cannot possibly be inferred today from the urban settlements, given the current state of archaeological investigation in that field. Lastly, we should point out that the rite of inhumation associated with a funerary cyst, such as appears in Khaldé, constitutes a funerary practice with a long tradition in Phoenicia, going back at least to the Late Bronze Age.

In this framework of archaeological finds, thought must be given to the question of the duality of *funerary rites* that exists in the Phoenician world during the Iron Age, and that we shall see repeated in the colonies of the west, including the ancient Phoenician settlements on the Iberian Peninsula, where the predominant funeral rite is also cremation.

In Syria–Palestine, cremation is documented for the first time in the eleventh century BC at Carchemish, Hama, Tell Halaf, Hazor and at some places in Cyprus. It has occasionally been claimed that the introduction of this new burial rite is linked with the invasion of the 'sea peoples' in the twelfth century BC. Whatever the reason for the origin of cremation in the region may have been, it is certain that, from the middle of the ninth century BC, this rite seems to have been introduced chiefly in the south of Lebanon and, in particular, in the territory of Tyre and Sidon. Cremation is predominant in the Phoenician necropolises of the ninth to seventh centuries BC, like Tambourit, Tell er-Rachidiyeh, Khirbet Silm, Joya, Qasmieh and Akhziv, although at times it coexists with some inhumations. This is in contrast to other northern territories, where inhumation would maintain its absolute dominance, as we can infer from the finds in the necropolis of Khaldé.

The practice of inhumation in graves or cysts would apparently not

be totally abandoned in southern Phoenicia. On the other hand, the study of various late necropolises, like the one at Sidon itself, argues in favour of a return to the practice of inhumation from 600 BC in southern Phoenicia.

Sidon

In southern Phoenicia, Sidon is currently inaccessible to archaeological investigation. Nowadays, Saida, the third great city of modern Lebanon, is sitting on top of the famous Phoenician port. Nevertheless in the territory inland from Sidon, the existence of two important necropolises at the foot of the hills dominating the city has been documented: the necropolises of Qrayé and Tambourit. The distribution of the funerary nuclei around the Phoenician coastal cities and their position on slightly higher ground or at the foot of the mountains of the Lebanese pre-littoral corresponds to the characteristic topography of the whole southern zone of Phoenicia and we shall see this repeated yet again in the territory of Tyre (Fig. 24).

In Tambourit, 6 km southeast of Sidon, a collective funeral cave was located a few years ago, containing several cremation burials inside it. The presence of some Greek imports associated with the burials places the find between the years 850 and 775 BC.

In the locality of Dakermann, near Sidon, another Phoenician necropolis, dated to around 600 BC, contained inhumation burials in cysts.

Sarepta

In Sarafand, a modern locality 13 km south of Sidon, is the site of ancient Sarepta, mentioned in the biblical texts because the prophet Elijah took refuge there in the ninth century BC. He describes *Zarephtath* as a city 'belonging to Sidon' (1 Kings 17:8–24). Mentioned in texts of the fourteenth century from Ugarit with the name *srptn* and in thirteenth-century-BC Egyptian texts, this city was for a very long time a satellite port of Sidon although throughout the eleventh and eighth centuries BC it was incorporated into the territory of Tyre. The Assyrian annals record that *Sa-ri-ip-tu* was conquered by Sennacherib in 701 BC.

Situated 100 m above sea level and dominating a broad bay well suited to shelter a well-protected harbour, Sarepta combined all the

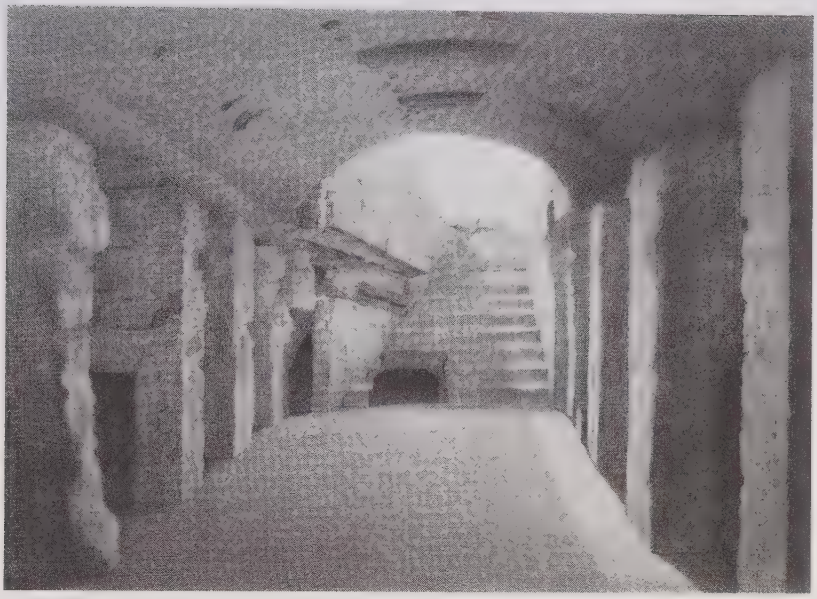


Fig. 24 Hypogeum in the necropolis at Sidon

necessary conditions to become the industrial port of neighbouring Sidon. In addition, it is the only Phoenician Iron Age city that it has been possible to excavate extensively, so it enables us to know the urban structure and layout of the inhabited area of a Phoenician settlement contemporary with the colonization of the west. Until it was excavated in 1969–74, the stratigraphy of not a single Phoenician Iron Age city was known.

The place appears to have been permanently inhabited for the first time at the beginning of the Late Bronze Age (about 1550 BC) and was soon transformed into a cosmopolitan centre receiving Mycenean and Cypriot imports (levels K–G), but it has not been possible to recognise any level of destruction or a violent break in its progress to the Iron Age (levels F–E). Between the end of the ninth and the middle of the seventh centuries BC (levels D–C), Sarepta entered into its period of maximum activity and development, when a qualitative leap in all its cultural, industrial and architectural manifestations can be detected. In that period the city becomes an important centre devoted to the manufacture and large-scale production of fine red-glazed ceramics – the 'classic' tableware that we shall see in the west and in the Hispanic enclaves. This pottery was made in large kilns sited in the industrial

quarter of the city. As pottery production developed in Sarepta, we find the first appearance, in the middle of the ninth century, of wheel-applied red glaze and the 'classic' forms of Phoenician ceramics, like the trilobate lipped jug or the commercial amphora of the west.

The industrial quarter of Sarepta also revealed spaces devoted to olive-oil production in great stone presses, zones for the manufacture of purple dye, areas devoted to copper metallurgy and countless circular ovens for making bread. Between 850 and 650 BC (level C) in Sarepta we notice an increase in production at all levels and unmistakable signs of trading relations, developing the whole catalogue of the pottery we find in the west. Another period of intense international exchange relations corresponds to the sixth to fifth centuries BC (level B).

Among other interesting finds, that of the northern harbour with great blocks of worked stone and other structures for mooring ships is outstanding. Of note, lastly, is a sanctuary dedicated to Tanit–Astarte, which was in use during the eighth to seventh centuries BC. An inscription found inside contains a dedication to the goddess Tinnit or Tanit, a deity considered to be western and Carthaginian before the finds at Sarepta.

Akhziv, Tell Abu Hawam and Tell Keisan

To conclude, we shall stress three important archaeological sites situated to the south of Tyre in the territory of modern Israel (see Figs. 2 and 26). The first of them is Akhziv or Akhzib, mentioned in the Old Testament and situated between St John of Acre and Tyre. Akhziv was an important port enclave conquered by the Assyrians in 702 BC. In its environs three Iron Age necropolises have been excavated; they differ from each other in their funeral rites and their chronology. The earliest necropolises date to the eleventh century BC and consist of inhumation burials. The southern necropolis, from the tenth to eighth centuries BC, is particularly interesting; it is made up of two well-defined burial areas: one with large hypogeal chambers that contain collective burials and the other containing exclusively cremations in urns deposited in open hollows in the ground. This area yielded many Phoenician funerary remains.

It has been deduced from this that two communities cohabited in Akhziv: the Israelite, which always rejected cremation of the corpse or individual inhumation, and the Phoenician, which burned its dead in

accordance with the northern Tyrian tradition. These dates also coincide with the period when Tyre spread its territorial dominion down to Mount Carmel.

A little further south, in Tell Abu Hawam, there existed another Phoenician settlement, analogous with the one at Akhziv, situated on the bay of Akko or St John of Acre, between Mount Carmel and the river Qishon, where the city of Haifa stands today. It was a strategic enclave, from which Tyre dominated the plain of Asdralon and the road into the Jordan valley, Megiddo and Beth Shan. The Phoenician enclave lay on top of Late Bronze Age levels (strata v–iv). The Phoenician levels (stratum iii) date to between the beginning of the tenth century and 750 BC and contain pottery with a distinct Tyrian derivation.

The third Tyrian settlement in the Mount Carmel region is Tell Keisan (possible ancient Ak-sa-pa), situated on a hill dominating the bay of Akko in Lower Galilee, the great alluvial plain of Asdralon, the mouth of the river Qishon and access to the great Palestinian centres of the interior like Megiddo. The excavations in Tell Keisan have shown uninterrupted Phoenician occupation from the tenth to the sixth centuries BC, with a climax in the eighth and seventh centuries. The archaeological finds clearly situate this enclave within the politico-cultural orbit of Tyre.

The extension of the frontiers of the kingdom of Tyre down to Mount Carmel during the tenth to eighth centuries BC is accompanied by considerable Phoenician influence over the territories of the interior of Palestine. The settling of Tyrian populations in Akhziv, Akko, Tell Abu Hawam and Tell Keisan coincides with the presence of Phoenician pottery of Middle Iron i in Hazor, Megiddo and Tell Qasile, among other Israelite cities.

3

The bases for the expansion in the Mediterranean

Having set the parameters of Tyre's economic policy and traced the main lines of her commercial strategy during the Iron Age, we can approach the question of the origin of Tyrian expansion in the Mediterranean. Once the causes have been established, it will be possible to fix the dates and define the character of the most ancient settlements in the west – marts, trading ports, ports of call, staging posts or colonies. If we disregard the foundation dates of Cadiz, Utica and Lixus at the end of the second millennium, given their ambiguity, and also the possible reasons for such an early expansion as being debatable and implausible, it is usual to attribute the Phoenician diaspora to the west, traditionally, to Assyrian pressure on the cities of the coast. Most authors who have dealt with the question have made pronouncements on these lines, authors such as Cintas, García Bellido, Moscati and Niemeyer, amongst others.

According to this hypothesis, Tyre's expansion to the west would have been merely a response to the demand for raw materials imposed by Assyria, and to the political and military pressure on Tyre, which are supposed to have forced large masses of the population in the east to flee to the west. From the eighth century BC, Tyre would have realized that she would have to cede all the initiative in the economic and commercial affairs of her maritime empire to Carthage.

If we accept this hypothesis, the economic role of Tyre in the international politics of the period would be reduced simply to a passive response in the face of the political and fiscal demands of Assyrian imperialism, one that is typical of a vassal relationship. Lethargy and the profound crisis that Tyre went through in the eighth and seventh centuries would have led in the end to an interruption in maritime trade with the west and the subsequent autonomy of her colonies. In their flight westwards, the Phoenicians would have headed for places they already knew: the small commercial staging posts founded during the twelfth century.

However, all the written references in the east state that the power of Tyre remained virtually intact until her conquest by Nebuchadnezzar in the sixth century BC and that her economic activity was curbed only occasionally. So we shall have to base our ideas on other theoretical assumptions when determining the causes and timing of Tyre's expansion to the west.

Other authors, like Albright and Röllig, from a completely different standpoint, state that the main causes of the diaspora were the internal dynamics of Phoenician society and the inexhaustible demands for raw materials – basically metals – precisely during the period at which the written sources in the east place the climax of Tyrian commerce, that is in the days of Hiram I in the tenth century BC.

But colonization of the west in the days of Hiram is not supported by the archaeological record. Moreover, the search for access routes to the east promoted by that monarch and the establishment of Tyrian enclaves in Syria and Cilicia had no purpose other than to make good the economic deficit and supply the demands of the great powers of the interior. Consequently the factor or factors which might destabilize this complex economic and commercial network and unleash the diaspora must be sought in another period.

Other hypotheses – the vacuum left at sea by the Mycenean might, an earthquake – have not prospered, given that they have not marshalled adequate arguments to be taken seriously.

Our hypothesis starts from the basis that there was no one causal factor but that the diaspora arose from the coming together of various interrelated factors over a long period of time, some being more important than others, depending on circumstances, until an external stimulus or one of the factors should serve to unleash it or destabilize the system as a whole.

The main question is not to determine the moment or the cause of the foundation of enclaves at Carthage and Cadiz in the west, but to clarify at what moment it became necessary or worthwhile for Tyre and other Phoenician cities to organize a naval enterprise which undoubtedly involved risk and, more particularly, considerable costs to the state.

THE VARIABLES

We must now recapitulate the information that we have been accumulating in the previous chapters and mark out the analytical bases on which to restate the question.

The literary sources report two moments of Tyrian colonization in the west: a phase of ancient foundations in the twelfth century BC (Cadiz, Utica, Lixus) not confirmed by archaeology as we have seen, based on western and later references; and a second phase, the beginning of which we can situate towards the end of the ninth century, documented from written references in both east and west. This second phase is contained in the policy undertaken by Ithobaal I and his successors and was to culminate in the foundation of colonies in northwest Africa – Auza, Carthage – and in Cyprus (Kition).

Our analysis will concentrate primarily on this phase on the basis of existing empirical, historiographic and documentary data.

In order to determine the historical framework and identify the genuine idiosyncratic characteristics of the Mediterranean colonies and marts, it is essential for us to dwell on the factors of an internal and/or external nature that prepared the way for the commercial and colonial expansion to the west.

We must consider factors of an internal nature because a commercial or colonial enterprise directed towards distant territories is only viable in very special circumstances: either at a time of shortages or political crisis, or else in a situation of stability, prosperity and solid institutional organization, in which the need to channel or export excess production – by means of tributes, taxes or the circulation of manufactured articles – could have provoked an openly expansionist policy with the consequent search for sources of raw materials, agricultural land or trade routes.

And we must consider factors of an external nature insofar as the prosperity of the Phoenician cities, and particularly of Tyre, was founded largely, as far as external policy was concerned, on three axes: their role as intermediaries between the great powers of the east, their specialist production of luxury goods destined for a foreign clientele and their preoccupation with becoming the main supplier of precious metals to the Asian empires. In this framework of international relations, the role played by Assyria was bound to be important, and perhaps even decisive, but only as a corollary to the circumstances of the internal socio-economic policy of the Phoenician cities; only the Assyrian empire could contribute to the commercial strangulation of Tyre or, on the contrary, serve as a stimulus to a naval and commercial initiative of considerable scope in that field.

Thus the ultimate causes of the expansion westwards must be sought fundamentally in the internal dynamics of Phoenician society in the east.

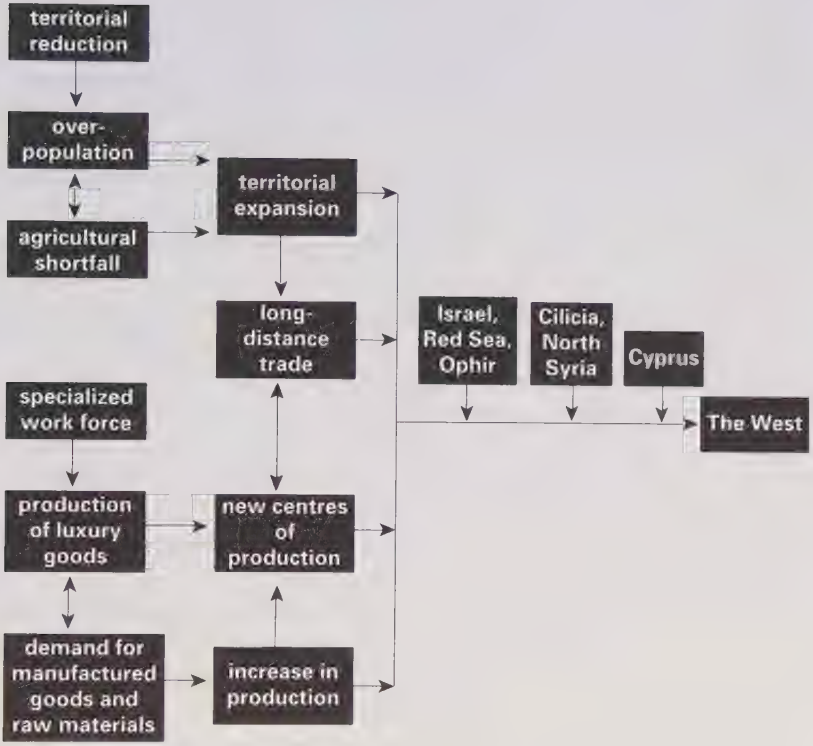


Fig. 25 Variables of the Phoenician expansion to the west

So we shall examine, in the first place, each of the internal factors that might play a part in this whole process, such as elements of balance or destabilizing factors in the system, and identify the moment at which a western venture might offer Tyre genuine economic rewards. In determining the causes of Phoenician colonization, we consider the following variables to be particularly significant (Fig. 25):

The geographic environment
The agricultural deficit and overpopulation
The specialized industries
The trade in metals and the silver standard
International trading circuits
Relations with Assyria
The infrastructure of long-distance trade.

The geographic environment

We lack studies reconstructing the palaeo-environment in relation to the Phoenician territory and, more concretely, the Iron Age. Even so, a few ancient references and various recent analyses carried out in peripheral regions enable us to determine the political, social and economic implications for Phoenicia of the serious reduction in her territory that occurred around 1200 BC. Without becoming involved in determinism such as assures us that the morphology of the territory predestined the Phoenicians to become the first naval power in the east, we must stress the importance of climatic and geographic factors in the course followed by the principal cities in the Iron Age.

We have already mentioned the loss of the major part of the Canaanite territory that occurred during the transition from the Late Bronze to the Early Iron Age, a reduction associated in the written tradition with the invasion of the 'Sea Peoples'.

In addition, we must point out that various studies in palaeoclimatology record important climatic changes around 1200 BC, which had serious repercussions on populations and living space. Indeed, during the sub-boreal period (3500–750 BC), important climatic oscillations occurred in the Near East which profoundly affected the relation of man to the environment. So, for example, during the first half of this climatic period, in the years 3500 to 2000 BC approximately, a humid phase is documented in the region which will have led to the first expansion of human groups into the desert areas of Syria–Palestine, and the establishment of settlements of a new type in the Negev, the Jordan valley and the Dead Sea area, that is, in steppe and desert regions.

After 2000 BC, the steppe advanced northwards and there was a regression of the forest zones which became restricted to the mountainous parts of the temperate zones; lastly, the sea level on the Mediterranean coast fell by up to 2 m between the years 2000 and 500 BC.

This gradual rise in temperature, drought and aridity is recorded chiefly in Syria–Palestine, Egypt and southeast Europe, so it seems that it was not a generalized phenomenon, since in other lands like the Zagros or central Europe the change was hardly perceptible, or is actually accompanied by increased humidity.

About 1200 BC, new climatic variations are recorded which, in a large part of Syria–Palestine, result in the Mediterranean-type vegetation being replaced by a desert-like Saharan type and in a serious deg-

radation of the woodlands following a considerable decline in rainfall. Various pollen analyses to the west of the Taurus mountains and in southeast Turkey indicate that until the year 1200 BC there were still cedar woods on the high plateaux and at heights over 1000 m.

A climatic crisis of this magnitude would undoubtedly produce destabilization and the uprooting of important centres of population as well as mechanisms for reducing the rate of demographic growth and, most particularly, a concentration of people in more favourable regions like the Phoenician coast.

The hypothesis of a great drought has occasionally been put forward as the ultimate cause of the fall of Mycenae and Ugarit in 1200 BC. It is difficult to express an opinion on this question but it is worth pointing out that some written reports of the period mention epidemics of plague in the Hittite Empire and in Egypt – maybe the 'seven plagues' of the Bible – as well as drought and famine in Ugarit. Moreover, it is the period in which legend situates the displacement of groups of people who fled to the west – Ulysses, Aeneas, Herakles – or who irrupted violently into the cities of the east – the 'Sea Peoples'.

The Phoenician territory seems to have been one of those least affected by the climatic changes, having a mild climate with long, warm summers, mild winters and abundant rainfall on the coasts and in the mountains, as Lebanon still has today. Towards the interior, in the Beqaa valley, however, the rainfall is much reduced, to some 500 mm, giving pronounced drought in summer.

The abundance of streams in spring that could be used for irrigation is found exclusively on the coastal plain, which constitutes the real agricultural hinterland of the Phoenician cities and which is in every respect inadequate to feed the large conurbations. The profound climatic and political changes would deprive the Phoenicians of a large part of their raw materials and basic foods, since Phoenicia was never able to become a genuine agricultural power.

We know that cities like Tyre, which sheltered huge concentrations of people, succeeded, by dint of drainage works and the building of cisterns, in growing crops intensively on the coast and supplied the urban population with drinking water during the tenth century BC. Ezekiel refers to the fertility of the coastal strip near the island of Tyre: 'thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God' (28:13 and 16).

Even so, Phoenicia had a grain deficit. The cereals grown on the high mountainsides could not meet the needs of a population that had been constantly growing since the beginning of the Middle Iron Age.

So the loss of the agricultural hinterland and the climatic deterioration of 1200 BC brought with them a concentration of population in the coastal plain and, with that, two new destabilizing factors: agricultural deficit and overpopulation, two sides of the same coin.

Agricultural deficit and overpopulation

From the tenth century onwards there are clear allusions to a deficit in foodstuffs in the territory of Tyre, a city that imported huge quantities of oil and cereals from abroad. The pact agreed between Hiram and Solomon envisages, basically, an exchange of Phoenician material and technical assistance against Israelite silver and agricultural products. Hiram I demanded food for the royal household (1 Kings 5:23) and insisted that the amount of grain paid by Solomon be considerable, which seems to reflect a substantial dependence on the part of Tyre in the matter of foodstuffs at that time.

Various classical authors of a later period mention problems of overpopulation in Phoenicia just before the period of colonization began – Justinus (*Epitome* 18:3, 5o); Curcius Rufus (6:4.20); Tertullian (*De anima* 30). In his history of the war against Jugurtha, written in the year 40 BC, Sallust is still more explicit: the arrival of the Phoenicians in North Africa (Carthage) is explained by the need to relieve the country of an excess of population and by a spirit of conquest (*Jug.* 19:1–2). The reference is not without interest, in that it is the first and only time that overpopulation and territorial conquest and not commercial objectives are mentioned as causes of the colonization of the west.

Both the archaeological record and various studies in palaeodemography confirm a vigorous demographic growth in Phoenicia and, in particular, in Tyre at the beginning of the first millennium BC. Between the twelfth and eighth centuries BC a considerable increase in settlements is in fact on record all along the coast. In some regions, like the Beqaa valley, the population growth gave rise around the tenth century BC to genuine demographic pressure on resources.

The demographic theme has attracted hardly any attention from modern authors working on Phoenician colonization. This is due principally to the fact that the question of imbalance between population and resources has always been a variable associated with Greek colonization, whereas the Phoenician expansion westward has long been interpreted from one point of view only, that of trade.

And yet excessive population must have been a serious problem for the Phoenician cities, especially during the tenth to eighth centuries BC; that is, before the massive deportations of thousands of Phoenicians to Nineveh in the time of Sennacherib. The engineering works begun in Tyre by Hiram I – including the invention of the cistern and extensions to the city – undoubtedly reflect a need to adapt the urban space to an increasing population.

The problem of overpopulation and of a shortfall in food supplies explains, among other things, Tyre's preoccupation with extending her territory in the tenth to eighth centuries BC. This is the time when Tyre acquired dominance over Sidon and all the southern lands as far as the bay of Acre and Mount Carmel. With her policy of annexation, it is obvious that Tyre is seeking access to the agricultural lands of northern Israel.

A few biblical references (II Sam. 8; I Kings 5:15) show that, as early as the end of David's reign, Hiram I was seeking an economic pact with the new Israelite monarchy, so we must consider the treaty signed later with Solomon as a renewal of earlier agreements (I Kings 5:16).

It cannot be a coincidence that Hiram I should send an ambassador to King David immediately after that monarch's victory over the Philistines in the year 975 BC, that is to say, when Israel had for the first time achieved dominance over the trade routes leading to Egypt and Arabia. All this reflects the importance Tyre attached to her southern frontier, in other words, the agricultural lands of the plain of Asdralon, the natural granary *par excellence* of Israel for the production of wheat and oil.

Solomon committed himself to delivering considerable quantities of wheat and olive oil annually to Tyre (I Kings 5:25) in exchange, as we know, for technical assistance (architects, craftsmen), cedar and cypress wood and 120 talents of gold (I Kings 5:24; 9:11–14).

One clause in the treaty between Hiram and Solomon, however, usually passes unnoticed, even by specialists, because its content is so strange. In fact, mention is made in the pact of the cession to Tyre by Israel of 'twenty cities' in the lands of Galilee (I Kings 9:11–14) as a guarantee of the agreements. This, of necessity, implies that Tyre was in a dominant position in the 'land of Cabul', that is, over vast territories of the plain of Asdralon.

Archaeology appears to confirm this clause in the treaty. Indeed, it affirms that there were Tyrian enclaves in Akhziv, Akko, Tell Keisan and Tell Abu Hawam, dominating the bay of Akko and, consequently,

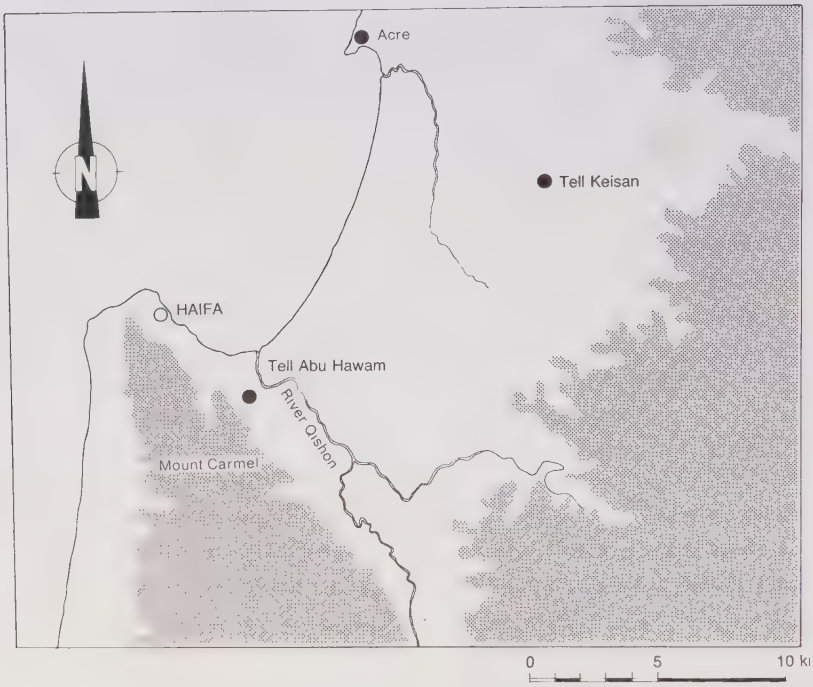


Fig. 26 The colonies of Tyre in the Bay of Haifa

the whole of the plain of Asdralon lying between the hills of lower Galilee and the dunes bordering the bay of Haifa (Fig. 26). In two of these settlements – Tell Abu Hawam and Tell Keisan – the establishment of a Phoenician population seems to start as early as the beginning of the tenth century BC, that is to say in the time of David.

In Tell Keisan, the archaeological record has shown a prosperous trade in olive oil and large-scale wheat cultivation in the area from the beginning of the Iron Age. (Of more that 5,200 samples of grain from the site, 70 per cent proved to be of wheat and the remaining 30 per cent of barley and other cereals.)

The plain of Acre, formed by alluvial soils and subject to a Mediterranean climate, was suitable for growing winter wheat. In this context, the interest shown by Hiram in these agricultural lands as soon as the Philistines were driven out of the region, the pacts with David and with his son, Solomon, and the cession to Tyre of lands in the plain of Asdralon, acquire a new politico-economic dimension.

In any case, the political treaties signed with Solomon, the expansion of the kingdom of Tyre southwards, the progressive control over routes leading to the agricultural hinterland through agreements with Israel or, later, by means of Tyrian installations in northern Syria, the whole of Tyre's political strategy, in short, is dictated by territorial ambitions arising largely from the three factors to which we have referred: limited space for agriculture, overpopulation and a shortfall in food supplies.

The specialized industries

The Phoenician cities consisted of large centres specializing in the manufacture of luxury and prestige articles destined for international trade and to satisfy the needs of a very restricted social elite in the east for prestige, authority and dominion. For their intrinsic value, the luxury goods required raw materials not readily available, and therefore valuable, and highly specialized techniques of craftsmanship.

The Phoenician workshops became famous for the production of sumptuous articles of carved ivory, of gold, silver and bronze receptacles and of gold jewellery with filigree and granular decoration, which we find mainly outside Phoenicia, in royal or princely tombs and in the palaces of the east. Consequently, this production implied the need for exotic materials and, above all, for precious metals.

During the ninth century BC, Tyre and other Phoenician cities became the only suppliers of manufactured goods to the neighbouring states which, like Assyria and Israel, could not procure them for themselves without increasing the costs of their military or political expansion. By absorbing the Phoenician production, whether by way of tributes and taxes or by trade and reciprocal arrangements, the Assyrian and Israelite economic systems helped consolidate the Phoenician economy.

At first sight, the provision of luxury products to the Assyrian empire might seem irrelevant to its economy. However, it should not be forgotten that the dignity of the Assyrian monarchy required its palaces, temples and capital city to display its power and wealth, at a time when those institutions were channelling these luxury goods from the coast to other Mesopotamian sectors or trading circuits.

As Byblos and Ugarit had done before, Tyre now became the principal purveyor of luxury merchandise within a trading circuit that stretched from Mesopotamia to Anatolia and the Aegean. In the long

run, the distribution of this merchandise led to a greater specialization of the workforce and to an increase in production when circumstances favoured such exchanges. This circulation of luxury goods was carried out by means of two exchange mechanisms that are not always easy to differentiate: impost and trade.

A large number of luxury objects of Phoenician manufacture found in the Assyrian palaces – silver and bronze vases, for example and decorated ivories – are not exclusively forms of tribute but are the product of trade. In practice, tributary relations would stimulate commercial exchanges between Assur and Tyre, which explains the commercial advantages, the protection and the autonomy that Assyria granted the Phoenician cities during a very long period, as will be seen later.

It will be inferred from all this that Tyre's whole policy was directed towards securing her supplies of metals and exotic materials for her specialized workforce. It was vital, therefore, to control the trade routes by sea and land which guaranteed the supply of raw materials and the distribution of her merchandise. Thus would be born in the tenth century a commercial empire which would be built up into a bond uniting the Mediterranean with the great Asian states of the interior.

The trade in metals and the silver standard

From the lists of tributes paid by Tyre to Assyria, we may infer that, within the scale of exchange values, the fundamental system of payment by Tyre consisted of silver, iron, tin and lead (Ezekiel 27:1–26).

In the ancient world, metal was indispensable to guarantee economic self-sufficiency. Metal meant having at one's disposal raw material for agriculture, for the military industry or for craftsmen, and a prestige element which was hoarded in the form of cups, vases or tripods, among other things. This is why it is very often difficult to differentiate between economic factors and prestige elements.

In the period in which we are interested, the great mineral reserves were located in Anatolia (silver, copper, lead, tin and iron), in Sinai and Cyprus (copper), in Etruria and the island of Elba (tin, copper and iron) and in Tartessos (silver, gold and tin).

The enormous quantities of silver that Tyre needed and had at her disposal – 'Tyre heaped up silver' (Zechariah 9:2–3) – could only come from Anatolia via Cilicia or else from the south of Spain.

During the first millennium, before the tenth to ninth centuries BC, there are no indications that metal was circulating on a large scale in western Asia. Neither the Assyrian economy, nor the situation in the Aramaic kingdoms or in Israel, could count on an organization capable of moving considerable quantities of metal. This is the role that Tyre would assume from the reign of Hiram I.

The biblical references concerning trade with Ophir, and various archaeological finds in Ezion-geber, where the existence of a Phoenician copper refinery from the tenth to ninth centuries BC has been recorded, show that Tyre was channelling the supply of metals to the interior of the Asian continent in the tenth century, and in particular of gold from Ophir and copper from Sinai.

Hiram I restricted himself to renewing a trading pattern that had brought prosperity to Ugarit as early as the Late Bronze Age. Indeed, during the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries BC Ugarit, which had specialized in the transport of metals between Anatolia, Cyprus, Egypt, the Aegean and Canaan, moved huge quantities of tin and copper and speculated on the prices of gold and silver. The city bought gold from Egypt at a low price and sold it at a higher price to the Hittite empire. The role of Ugarit, the first centre of the metal trade in all of western Asia, implied an organized system of sea transport.

The generalized crisis of the twelfth century led to a decline in the demand for luxury goods and in the supply of ivory and precious metals, the distribution of which in the Near East had been in the hands of Ugarit and Byblos, fundamentally. With the reduction in the volume of commercial exchanges in Syria–Palestine and the consequent interruption in the economic activities of Canaan–Phoenicia, the role of intermediary that had brought such profits to the Canaanite cities came to an end.

Once the crisis was over, around the tenth century BC, thanks to the initiative and recovery of Tyre, the Phoenician cities found they needed to seek new sources of metal supplies and new customers for their luxury products. Moreover, Phoenicia had a guaranteed sale or outlet for metals that were so necessary to the ancient economy and vital for industry, agriculture and the production of arms.

Metal, like any heavy merchandise, is easier to transport in boats than on land, as the Greeks would realize during the first millennium BC (Aristotle, *Politica*, 1257 ff.) Ugarit had at its disposal merchant ships of some 20 m in length and with a loading capacity of up to 200 tons.

During the first millennium, iron was the most important strategic material for the great states of the interior – Assyria, Babylonia – which needed vast quantities to equip their armies. The Assyrian annals and the records of private merchants name Phoenicia, Damascus and Cilicia as the regions from which metal was obtained and they, in turn, obtained the iron ore probably from the mines in the Taurus mountains.

The 160 tons of iron discovered in the ruins of the palace of Sargon II give some idea of the quantity of metal reaching Assyria from 'the countries on the coast'.

In the Assyrian lists, Tyre, Carchemish and Damascus again figure at the head of the centres supplying the largest quantities of gold and silver to the states of the interior at that period.

During the Assyrian era, the value of gold and silver was again very high. Trade in silver, both as ingots and in the form of manufactured articles, was desirable, not only for profit or for hoarding but also for acquiring social status and rank, proof of the existence of a system of reciprocity – gifts and rewards – and a system of equivalency very close to that of an actual pre-monetal circulation.

In western Asia, because of their high value, gold and silver offered enormous advantages for business dealings and the value of things came to be determined according to a metal standard. Thus, the Akkadian word *kaspu* meant both the metal itself and the value or form of payment for a piece of merchandise. We would find a modern equivalent in the French 'argent' or the Argentinian Spanish 'plata'.

In Ugarit, the general system of payment was stipulated in silver. 'Price' in Ugaritic was synonymous with 'weight' in Akkadian and the value of products and the volume of payments and wages were frequently fixed through the medium of a specific weight of gold or silver. Even so, the exchange metal *par excellence* was always silver, which was cast in ingots, disks, bars and rings which circulated at a set weight, stipulated in shekels.

During the first millennium, silver finally came to fulfil the function of a standard rate for commercial transactions. Its weight and quality were stabilized through 'hallmarks', a process for which the temples were sometimes responsible.

The normal unit of weight was the mina (0.5 kg) which was equal to 50 shekels. A shekel of silver was equivalent to some 200 shekels of copper and 227 shekels of tin.

A talent of silver (some 30 kg) was equivalent to 50 minas and 3000 shekels. In relation to gold, the equivalency was 1:4, that is to say that 2 shekels of gold were equal to 8 shekels of silver.

This makes it very difficult to say exactly when the circulation of metals ended and a monetary circulation began. In the days of the neo-Assyrian empire, silver already functioned as a standard of value and exchange. This means that it was already circulating with a standard value, in short as 'money'. The circulation of metals or metallic objects, such as gold and silver cups, with possible pre-monetary connotations, is one of the most controversial questions of ancient economic history.

In the lists of merchandise at Ugarit and in the lists of tributes paid by Phoenicia to Assyria, the weight of the metal cups seems to be homogeneous. Thus a gold cup corresponds to 1 mina (of gold), to 4 minas of silver and to 60 shekels of gold. This means that it has a precise standard value.

Wen-Amon was robbed by pirates in Dor of a number of silver ingots intended as payment for wood in Byblos and with a total weight of almost 3 kg. Egypt had to replace them with an equivalent value in gold and silver cups.

All this leads us to assume that both Tyre and Assyria had evolved towards an economic system in which there are references or units of value which operate as equivalent exchange values in silver or gold, in other words, 'money'. We are faced then with an economic system with units of value (coinage and money), exchange values (prices), defined standards of weight, that is ponderal units, and speculation on the value of gold, all features of a market economy with its laws of supply and demand.

In this new system, the pre-monetary standard of reference had replaced the simple barter system typical of a primitive economy, where the value of the merchandise is determined basically by the value of its usefulness (use value).

If we accept all this, that is to say, if we subscribe to the idea of a mercantile-type economy, the role of Tyre in this whole mechanism acquires another dimension and her colonies in the west, too, take on another dimension in the framework of the circulation of metals.

Between the end of the ninth and the end of the eighth centuries, Assyria experienced a shortage of silver. This can be inferred from the loan of a mina of silver at the extraordinary interest rate of 400 per

cent. Some authors, like Winter, have interpreted this fact as the consequence of a drastic reduction in the supply of precious metals, and especially silver, to the Assyrian empire. All this must undoubtedly be seen as an immediate repercussion of the Syrio-Urartian alliance which, in the event, deprived Tyrian merchants of access to the Anatolian metals.

By way of contrast, in the days of Sargon II, at the end of the eighth century BC, Assyria experienced an economic growth and an increase in the circulation of money which caused the shekel of silver at one stage to be divided into smaller units. The presence of a large number of silver ingots and disks with guarantee marks throughout the Assyrian Empire, moreover, indicates that silver is beginning to be accumulated or hoarded. Sargon boasted of 'having accumulated silver in his palace' and of having succeeded in 'making the buying price of copper comparable with that of silver in Assyria'. No doubt Tyre and other centres were introducing that metal into Assyria from new sources of supply in the west.

The abundance of silver and its increased circulation in Assyria finally brought about a fall in the price of the metal in the days of Asurbanipal, in the middle of the seventh century BC, together with its counterpart, a general increase in prices. Logically, gold increased considerably in value relative to silver. So here we are in the eighth century BC looking at a typically inflationary process, as we should call it in modern terms, and a feature of a monetary economy.

The general rise in prices and the depreciation of the unit of value used in exchanges was bound to lead in the long run to conflicts and social tensions. The immediate consequence for Tyre was a decline in external, chiefly Assyrian, demand. For Assur, it entailed the end of her dependence as far as Tyrian sources of supply were concerned. It is no coincidence that this is precisely the moment, in the middle of the seventh century BC, when Assyria decides on a final and definitive assault against Tyre.

So the introduction of large quantities of silver into western Asia by Tyre, roughly between the years 720 and 650 BC, when the access routes to Cilicia, Anatolia and the Red Sea had been closed to Tyre's trade, can be explained only if the Phoenicians had already initiated large-scale exploitation of new metal-bearing strata. Such an abundance of silver could only come from the Rio Tinto mines in Huelva which had just started to be exploited.

Trading circuits

Each of the Phoenician cities controlled a small area of land which made them into sovereign states, called *Uru* (city) or *Kur* (territory, country, region) by Assyrian sources. Of these independent political entities, Tyre–Ushu was undoubtedly the most densely populated.

The hypothesis that Tyre never had territorial ambitions on the Asian continent has always been defended. We have already seen how the policy pursued by the city from Hiram I to Ithobaal I shows the exact opposite. The position of the Phoenician cities made them pre-eminently suited to become intermediaries between Mesopotamia and Egypt. This role depended logically on control of the trade routes to Syria and Mesopotamia along a few natural highways.

The mountains of Amanus and of the Lebanon and the hills of Samaria and Judaea formed a genuine natural barrier for the Phoenician cities, a barrier that protected them from the great currents of invasion coming from Mesopotamia. The mountains of the Lebanon are difficult of access in the eastern direction. In the centre, the depression formed by the Orontes, the Litani, the Jordan and the Beqaa valley, which is difficult to negotiate, lies in front of a second mountain chain, the Anti-Lebanon, which marks the limit of the great desert tableland of Syria.

The most prosperous Phoenician city, Tyre, did not enjoy a position that favoured communications with the interior. From the Phoenician coast, the only access routes to the east consisted of the valley of the Orontes and the plain of Amuq, the pass leading from Arvad to the lake of Homs and the Akko depression which led to the Jordan valley. Consequently, Tyre faced the dilemma of either signing political or commercial pacts with Israel and the Aramaic kingdoms of Syria or else extending her frontiers by annexing the territory of Akko or by establishing colonies on the mouth of the Orontes. Otherwise Tyre was left with nothing but the sea. In other words, the economy of Tyre was safe provided that enclaves like Akko, Tell Keisan, Akhziv or Myriandros were in her sphere of territorial influence.

The first circuit: Israel, the Red Sea and Ophir

The commercial and territorial expansion of Tyre began after the rout of the Philistines in 975 BC. This event opened up for the first time all kinds of possibilities for a state needing to find an outlet for its products and afflicted with a deficit of foodstuffs and an excess of population.

The joint enterprise organized by Hiram and Solomon guaranteed that Tyre would obtain supplies of food, that her manufactured products would gain entry into Israel and that she would obtain precious metals originating in Ophir. In this way, the alliance with Solomon met all the economic needs of Tyre and implied the first step in the policy of growth engaged in by her monarchy.

The Red Sea project, financed by Hiram and Solomon, set out above all to satisfy the demand for gold which arose at that time in the Asian Near East. Up till then, Egypt had been the main supplier of gold to those regions and, in fact, had flaunted its monopoly of the distribution of precious metals to the east. The building of a merchant fleet at Ezion-geber and the trade with Ophir must be seen as a hostile act against Egypt's enfeebled trade and as a first attempt on Tyre's part to break the Egyptian monopoly over the distribution of precious metals in Asia.

However, the trading circuit in the Red Sea came to an end with the accession of Sheshonq – the Shishak of the Bible – to the Egyptian throne. Once Solomon was dead, Sheshonq attacked Palestine and took Jerusalem in about 930 BC. From then on, Egypt was once again a threat to the growth of Tyre and Israel. The partition of the kingdom of Israel and the rivalry between the two parts, skilfully exploited by Egypt, led in the end to the loss of Tyre's most important customer for luxury goods – Israel – and the disappearance of a vital source of wealth for her economy – Ophir. Moreover, Tyre's relations with the northern kingdom, Israel, would get progressively worse until the Phoenician city found itself on the verge of establishing a new circuit to compensate for its losses in the south.

Peaceful coexistence between Israel and Tyre lasted, in effect, until the middle of the ninth century BC with Solomon's successors – Omri and Ahab – thanks to the periodic renewal of the old treaties of alliance at the instigation of the new capital, Samaria. The move to the new capital of the kingdom, right on the trade route linking it to southern Phoenicia, and the marriage pacts between the royal houses of Tyre and Samaria, are an expression of the wish to maintain good relations between the two kingdoms.

However, after the reign of Ahab (874–853 BC) a spirit of enmity grew up in Israel, resentment and annoyance with the old ally in the north who was blamed for unilateral violation of the treaty of alliance (Psalm 83:7; Isaiah 23; Ezekiel 26–28; Zechariah 9:2–3; Amos 1:9). It is possible that this crisis stemmed from the distinctly pro-Assyrian

turn taken by the house of Omri around 841 BC. In the middle of the ninth century BC, Jehosaphat attempted in vain to reopen the Red Sea trade (1 Kings 22:48–49), when Tyre had already consolidated a new trading axis: that of Cilicia and northern Syria.

The second circuit: northern Syria and Cilicia

Both the Assyrian annals and the archaeological record bear witness to the presence of Tyrian traders in the north of Syria from the beginning of the ninth century BC. The establishment of permanent settlements on the gulf of Alexandretta assured Tyre of access to the fertile alluvial plains of the region, a certain monopoly in the provision of silver, iron and tin from Cilicia and Anatolia and an outlet for her manufactured products towards Aleppo, Zinjirli, Karatepe, Carchemish and Til Barsip (see Fig. 30).

From her establishments on the Gulf and on the Euphrates, Tyre controlled the movement of goods towards Mesopotamia and south-east Anatolia, supplying these with gold, silver and bronze. By way of tributes and commercial transactions, this new economic axis led directly to Assur at a time when the Assyrian empire was about to undertake military incursions into Syria.

But this trading circuit was to be interrupted between the end of the ninth century and the beginning of the eighth century BC. Indeed, around 800 BC an alliance was concluded between Urartu and the kingdoms of northern Syria, which culminated in a very little while in Syria–Urartu having an iron control over the trade routes linking the Mediterranean with the east, which gave them direct access to Cilicia, Anatolia and the Aegean, that is to say, to the main metal-bearing deposits of western Asia. This situation is reflected in a severe reduction in the supply of metals to Assur, especially silver, the distribution of which had been mainly in the hands of Tyre until then.

Very soon, the territorial restructuring of Cilicia, the consolidation of the Aramaic states and the progressive Greek competition in the region, combined with the military campaigns of Salmanasar III on the Orontes, meant that from 800 BC Tyre lost her preeminent position in Syria and her commercial monopoly in that territory.

Furthermore, at the end of the ninth century and as a consequence of the unification of the Aramaic tribes, the kingdom of Aram–Damascus was consolidated. The main caravan routes between east and west and between north and south passed through Damascus and from then until the Assyrian conquest of Damascus in 732 BC they

were under the control of the king of Damascus. Taking advantage of a temporary Assyrian decline in the years 824–811 BC, Hazael of Damascus started to expand southwards, towards Israel and Judah, in order to obtain possession of the trade routes to Egypt and Arabia. With this dangerous neighbour, Tyre finally lost a large part of her land trade and her activities were reduced to exchanges of luxury goods with the powerful rulers of Damascus.

The third circuit: the Mediterranean

From now on only one trading circuit was left to Tyre for her ultimate monopoly: Cyprus and the west. This is the period when Pygmalion, whose name is associated with the founding of Carthage, was ruling in Tyre. It is also at the end of the ninth century that Kition was founded in Cyprus.

From the beginning of the eighth century, the production and distribution of luxury goods for consumption by elites suffered a harsh reverse when the Assyrian Empire revised its requirements, which now were slanted more towards raw materials, especially silver, iron and copper. Faced with this new demand, Tyre was obliged to widen her trading orbit and, consequently, to increase production of goods for exchange or else create new centres of production on the basis of a new trading axis.

The political resurgence of Assyria following the accession of Tiglatpileser III to the throne in the middle of the eighth century was made possible by the conquest and control of central and northern Syria, which was helped by the breakdown of the Syrio-Urartian alliance. From the conquest of the lands of Syria and Urartu, only Carchemish was saved and this gave Assur access to the Anatolian metals. With the conquest of Damascus in 732 BC, Phoenician territory was surrounded by Assyrian provinces on its eastern, southern and northern flanks. This policy culminated in the campaigns of Sargon II, who seized Cilicia and the gulf of Alexandretta in 715, severing Tyre's last commercial links with the region. However, by then the Tyrians were already established in North Africa and Andalusia, as the archaeological record shows.

Relations with Assyria

There are very few detailed studies in existence concerning the Assyrian economy as a whole and undoubtedly the best are the works of Diakonoff, Jankowska, Oppenheim and Postgate.

The dominant hypothesis assumes iron control on the part of the Assyrian rulers over Phoenician territory and the commerce of Tyre. Trade would have been reduced to a mere compulsory exchange and the only alternative to this kind of 'war economy' for Tyre would have been expansion into the western Mediterranean.

The Soviet researchers maintain that Assyrian economic and commercial supremacy was supported on two basic factors: its considerable agricultural production and its success in controlling international trade through non-economic coercion and 'forcible exchange', based in turn on two political expedients: booty and tribute.

Forcible exchange would have come about as a result of the different levels of economic development in western Asia. The imbalance would have forced Assyria to replace the free exchange of products with this exchange based on coercion, in order to unify the various economies in favour of the centre. As a developed state, Assyria needed metals and other products, demand for which increased with the increasing luxury of the dominant elite. Given the conditions existing in the international market at the beginning of the first millennium BC, with peripheral economies, incapable of investing or channelling these products, Assyria, with her favoured strategic position controlling the great trade routes of the Euphrates, the Tigris and the Zagros, would have found herself compelled to force international trade and, in the long run, political unity.

As the result of massive deportations of the inhabitants of the conquered territories, the Assyrian kings came to dominate a huge ruined and depopulated territory in the eighth century BC.

In Diakonoff's opinion, the main problem of the Assyrian kings stemmed from the treatment meted out to the great international trading centres like Tyre and hence his doubts as to whether the autonomous city should be considered as a threat to the stability of the empire or as one of the pillars of its economy.

Postgate (1979) contradicts some of Diakonoff's theories by claiming that Assyria never practised a policy of intervention in the affairs of other kingdoms and that there was never any Assyrian government monopoly over international trade. On the contrary, this author thinks that contact with Mediterranean trade helped the Assyrian rulers, who even went so far as to encourage private commerce. Assyria's whole economic policy would have been one of *laissez faire*, refraining from manipulating the economies of annexed regions or

controlling market prices. On the other hand, he defends the hypothesis that the royal reserves of gold and silver were a vital component in the Assyrian economy, which made it very vulnerable to changes in provision from outside: any interruption or increase in the supply of silver could have disastrous effects on its economy and create serious adminstrative problems.

In short, Postgate, with other authors like Oppenheim, considers that the exchange relationships between Assur and Tyre were based on mechanisms other than booty and tribute, peaceful trade being one of them. In view of this controversy, it may be as well to look again at a series of the most significant events in the relations between Tyre and Assyria.

The Assyrians were the first to initiate a colonialist and militarist strategy in the Near East during the first millennium. They appeared on the Mediterranean coast during the ninth century BC and demanded payment of tributes (*biltu*, *maddatu*) by the principal states and cities of the Levantine coast. The Assyrian tribute lists almost always start with metals, followed in importance by ivory, cloth, wooden furniture and perfumes.

The first report of payment of tributes is recorded in the case of Asurnasirpal II, who received tribute from Tyre, Sidon, Byblos and Arvad in the year 876 BC at the mouth of the Orontes. This first Assyrian intervention never at any time implied a real danger of conquest but rather an opportunity for Tyre to obtain important concessions in the matter of trade. At those dates, Ithobaal I was governing Tyre.

In an Assyrian relief of the time (Fig. 27) we see some envoys from the king of Tyre bringing presents (*namurtu*) on the occasion of the formal opening of Asurnasirpal II's palace. Rather than as an act of vassalage, Ithobaal was probably happy to pay tribute as a toll for transit towards the routes to the interior of Syria, with the aim of gaining access to new sources of raw materials. So these would be 'obligatory' presents.

Like his predecessor, Salmanasar III (858–824 BC) saw the coast as nothing more than a hunting ground and a region from which to receive tribute. There was no systematic plan of conquest and Phoenicia had no place in the main objectives of this Assyrian ruler. Crossing the Euphrates and reaching the mouth of the Orontes, Salmanasar obtained gold, silver, copper, iron, purple cloth, cedarwood and ivory from the Phoenician kings.

With the accession of Adad-Ninari III (810–783 BC), a qualitative

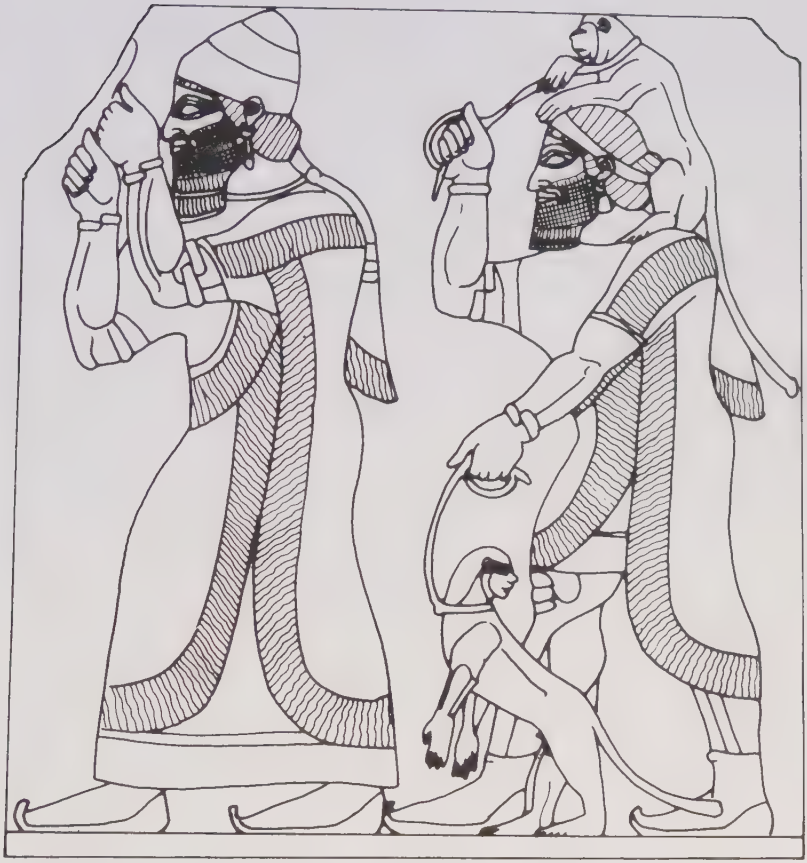


Fig. 27 Phoenicians bringing tribute to the king of Assyria. Bas-relief from the palace of Asurnasirpal II in Nimrud (859–839 BC)

and quantitative change can be seen for the first time in the tribute material from Tyre. Once northern Syria had been subdued, this monarch installed himself in Damascus, where he received ambassadors from the king of Tyre and substantial quantities of gold, silver and ivory. The volume of these tributes shows clearly a considerable increase in the wealth of the region at the end of the ninth century BC.

Adad-Ninari received twenty times more than Salmanasar III from the Phoenician cities, which no doubt reflects greater pressure for tribute on the part of Assur or else the prosperity of the Phoenician ports which were then in a position to import and pass on a greater volume of precious metals.

Another novelty can be seen in the lists of Assyrian tributes at the end of the ninth and beginning of the eighth centuries. Cedarwood is no longer mentioned and the number of luxury goods and finished products – metal vases, carved ivory objects – and above all precious metals has increased. We do not know whether the decline in wood is the result of the ecological crisis in Phoenicia or whether the woodlands were laid bare by human activity, but what is interesting to note is the change implied in the direction of Tyre's commercial strategy: the appearance of new sources of raw materials and silver.

It can be said, then, that until the eighth century BC, payment of tribute to Assyria was more or less a matter of routine and had little repercussion on the Tyrian economy. However, with the accession of Tiglatpileser III (745–727 BC) to the throne of Assyria, things changed. Although Phoenicia did not figure in his plans of conquest, the military policy of Assyria was to create a political and economic ring round Tyre and Sidon. But an independent and autonomous Tyre, once Hama, Damascus and northern Phoenicia were subdued, could be very beneficial. It is not without significance that the reign of one of the most aggressive Assyrian monarchs with regard to the Levantine coast coincided with one of the most prosperous periods for Tyre's commerce, between 790 and 738 BC.

As Isaiah rightly comments (23:2–8), by paying tribute Tyre remained safe from a power on which, in reality, the prosperity of her trade depended.

The exchange relations between Tyre and Assur were not based only on the imposition of tributes; there was in fact genuine trade between the two. There is evidence too of free trade and even of private trade on the part of Tyre during the Assyrian period.

Indeed, in a letter from an Assyrian governor to Tiglatpileser III, dated in Nimrud to 738–734 BC, the importance conceded to private trade by the Assyrian monarchy is demonstrated. In that letter there is talk of 'buying and selling', that is of commercial transactions and not of tribute, in the ambit of the Phoenician cities. This Assyrian official writes that 'he has allowed the people of Sidon to fell wood [of the Lebanese mountains] and to work with it but not to sell it to the Israelites or the Egyptians'. Assyria imposes certain restrictions but allows trade to develop.

Oppenheim (1969) has shown, moreover, that there was regular overland trade through which products and raw materials originating from many different places (Cypriot copper, iron from Cilicia, wine

from Syria, tin from Armenia, perfumes and textiles from Phoenicia, slaves, horses, linen, honey) reached the Mesopotamian cities; Tyre had the monopoly for supplying these through her agents and subsidiaries in Babylonia, Uruk and Ur.

Yet again, the facts endorse the hypothesis of preferential trading relations with Tyre and of a clear desire on the part of Assyria to open her market to products arriving from Tyre and Sidon. Just as his successors would do, Tiglatpileser III was able to subdue a territory politically but without breaking up its trading circuits if that redounded to his own benefit, since military annexation of the kingdom of Tyre would have shifted its economic axis towards Cyprus and the west, which was not part of Assyrian political plans.

Neverthless, in exchange for freedom of trade and getting back into the Syrian market after the fall of Damascus in 732 BC, Tyre and her king, Mattan II, had to pay exorbitant amounts of gold. The 150 talents of gold paid by Tyre to Tiglatpileser III are equivalent to some 4,300 kg of the precious metal.

We can say that from the middle of the eighth century BC relations between Assur and Tyre ceased to be a prestige activity and a matter of collecting tributes for Assyria and came to be based on the key position occupied by Tyre as a centre of economic power. Assur obtained tribute and was assured of preferential treatment in trade so she had no reason to intervene in Tyrian economic affairs or to compete with her trade. Tyre was thereby converted into an instrument of Assyrian expansion.

Even in difficult times of open conflict between the two states, of all the cities on the coast as far as Gaza, the only one that was not incorporated into the empire in 734–732 BC was Tyre. So Tyre received favoured treatment in return for just one condition: not trading with Egypt, Assyria's great rival. In conclusion, we can say that the commercial ties with Tyre were vital to Assyria's economy and for the balancing of her finances. So the idea of a profound crisis in Tyre from the eighth century BC and of a major decline in her economy and trade is far from the truth. On the contrary, the Assyrian era was beneficial for Tyre and for the whole of southern Phoenicia until its fall at the beginning of the sixth century BC. It is the flourishing city described by Ezekiel (26, 27) on the eve of the siege by Nebuchadnezzar. From all this, we can infer that the Phoenician cities played an essential part in the stability and growth of the Assyrian Empire. The empire at its height in fact fostered exchange relations of benefit to both states.

Assyria needed raw materials, especially wood and metals for her agriculture, her craftsmen and her military industry. Faced with an obvious imbalance in the economic counterparts, there was no other solution for Assur but to force such exchanges through tributes and tolls.

That Assur controlled the trading circuits of the coastal cities is shown by the fact that as each Assyrian monarch came to the throne, rebellion broke out in the Phoenician cities. The importance attached by Assur to controlling the trade routes of Cilicia, Urartu, Damascus and Israel proves yet again that there was Assyrian trade in the west.

The collection of tolls and tributes from Tyre, measured in terms of a silver standard or its equivalent in luxury goods, must be interpreted as a way of controlling a trading partner while at the same time respecting her autonomy. This kind of impost was aimed at reorientating the economic and commercial activity of the Phoenician cities towards Assyria and not towards other dangerous competitors like Egypt. To satisfy Assyrian demands, Tyre needed to obtain and channel huge quantities of silver.

Assyria demanded from Tyre things it could not obtain easily in other territories: at first iron for its war machine and later silver, gold and bronze. From the end of the eighth century BC Phoenicia was to be the main supplier of raw materials in the east, implying that Assyrian demand now determined the expansionist tendency that was Tyre's habitual policy, turned this time towards the Mediterranean.

Tiglatpileser III's successors, Salmanasar V and Sargon II, did not modify that monarch's economic strategy. They attacked Israel and even conquered Cyprus from the Syrian coast, but they did not touch Tyre. It was only because of the general insurrection led by Luli and Hoseas that Phoenicia became, for the first time, the main object of Assyrian repression at a time, it must not be forgotten, when Phoenicia had lost her economic importance for Assyria. Thus Sennacherib, established near Tyre, would take Sidon and Akko and force the king of Tyre, Luli, to flee into exile in 701 BC (Isaiah 23:1–14). The decline of Tyre started at the beginning of the seventh century BC and culminated in the blockade by Asurbanipal in 668 BC. Assyria had broken Tyre's political organization in 701 BC but still took a long time to modify her commercial system.

It can be said, then, that the whole history of Assyrian expansion to the west followed a plan: to control the southern road of Syria–Palestine, with the aim of attacking Egypt, which Asarhadon finally

did. This strategy involved domination of Hama, Damascus and Israel, but not Phoenicia. Tyre succeeded in sustaining a policy of compromise, reorientated her trade toward Assur, and preserved her autonomy to the end, all this with substantial economic rewards.

Infrastructure of long-distance trade

It is natural that booming trade should move those involved to widen their sources of supply. Tyre's western adventure must be placed in such a context: one of a commercial and colonial enterprise, with all its complex implications.

As we have said, the two great problems for the rulers of Tyre were a shortage of food and the supply of raw materials. The first could be solved by means of trading agreements (for example, with Israel), or colonization of agricultural territory (Botrys, Miryandros, Kition, Carthage). Both ways required state intervention. Procurement of metals depended instead on importing them from far-off lands. The founding of colonies in the west could meet this twofold requirement: production of surplus food and procurement of silver, gold, copper and tin.

For an undertaking of this nature to be profitable, the transport of ore or processed metal must be done in large quantities. The production of metals demands a whole series of complex processes from the phase of extraction in the mine, through transport, smelting, making alloys, finishing and marketing. Consequently, an undertaking of this nature demands an administration governing all these facets. The organization, moreover, has two major constraints: its production capacity and distance, which is why it is rarely undertaken by an individual or a commercial firm.

Long-distance trade must be based on solid and solvent organization, since it involves many professions: producers, craftsmen, brokers, transporters, miners, merchants, technicians, shippers and so on. The greater the distance, the greater must be the trading value of the product, to justify the scope of the commercial network. Only if the merchandise has real value will it compensate for the enormous costs of transport.

In short: an enterprise on this scale will not be embarked on at a time of crisis or economic decline but rather in circumstances that create new demands for raw materials and offer outlets for surplus manufactured products. The expansion to the west and the founding

of the colonies in southern Spain could only be undertaken by Tyre when she was sure of attaining her objectives: guaranteed silver ore and plentiful food resources, and the certainty of real economic rewards. In this sense, the western adventure can only be described as genuine expansion with all its implications: territorial, agricultural, colonial, commercial, demographic and interventionist.

As for the dates of the expansion to the west, these must be restricted to a very definite time span: between the end of the ninth century and 720 BC, the point when the Assyrian market was flooded with silver obtained from new sources of supply. We have the starting point in two historical dates in the second half of the ninth century BC, the founding of Kition, around 820 BC, and the founding of Carthage in 814 BC. Consequently, the establishment of the Phoenician centres in Spain and the earliest exploitation of the silver in the mines of Rio Tinto and Aznalcóllar in Huelva must fall between these dates and the end of the eighth century BC. This time scale seems to coincide, as well, with the one drawn up in Book 1 of Eusebius' *Cronica*, a work containing the inventory of the 'thalassocracies' or naval powers that dominated the Mediterranean after the fall of Troy. In this list, originally attributed to Diodorus, the Phoenician thalassocracy lies in eighth place, after the Lydians, the Meonians, the Pelasgians, the Thracians, the Rhodians, the Phrygians and the Cypriots (Diodorus 5:84) and is said to have lasted forty-five years, roughly between 850 and 810 BC.

This raises the question anew of when it was profitable for Tyre to take on such huge expense in a western enterprise that involved an enormous deployment of means of transport, human material, equipment and personnel.

4

Phoenician trade: exchange mechanisms and organization

Insofar as we are dealing with a people who were traders first and foremost, it is right to ascribe to commercial exchange and all the political and social institutions connected with it the importance they deserve in the unfolding of the Mediterranean expansion. This means defining the part played by the state, the palace, the religious institutions, the temple and private initiative as driving forces in the commercial enterprise in the west. Given that a direct connection exists between political structure and trading norms, the organization of trade and its exchange mechanisms would depend on the structure of the corresponding political system.

The Phoenician commercial network in the Mediterranean is one of the best-known diasporas of its kind and one of the most fully described in classical texts and in studies of ancient trade. But it has rarely been studied in depth. For the most part, the tendency is to consider the main features of this maritime enterprise to be piracy, barter, improvization or colonial adventure. It has often been the custom, too, to lay down a linear succession of stages in the evolution of trade – 'silent' trade, barter, mart, colony – without taking account of the fact that when the Phoenicians embarked on their expansion westward, they had centuries of mercantile experience behind them.

We shall now proceed to a general appraisal of the part played by trade, traders and the Phoenician commercial and political institutions in the light of the various economic theories that have dealt with the question – although, unfortunately, they refer largely to the second millennium – and of the classical and eastern sources most closely connected with the Phoenician world; but we shall always start from the hypothesis that the Phoenician establishments in the west are, basically, a long-distance projection of Phoenician society and its institutions.

THE STATE AND PRIVATE INITIATIVE IN THE TRADE OF THE NEAR EAST DURING THE SECOND MILLENNIUM

No society can fail to consume, nor, by the same token, can it fail to produce and distribute. It follows, then, that economic activity as a whole, centring on the production, distribution and consumption of goods, is a dynamic and circular process. Within that circulation of products, distribution provides the fundamental link. What is more, all the enduring relationships in a society involve transactions, exchanges and, when things become more complex, trade.

Students of ancient societies are not well versed in questions of economics and so we tend at times to situate economic activity within the parameters of modern economic analysis – money, markets, profit, the accumulation of earnings, price mechanisms. Logically this fosters the compartmentalization of types and somewhat abstract economic categories and a tendency towards explanatory reductionism, in which the concepts are too rigid to bring all the variables into play. So, for example, it is usual to treat private enterprise and state enterprise as mutually exclusive, or mercantile exchange may be ruled out when other systems of exchange such as reciprocity and redistribution predominate.

When adequate written documentation is not available, it is extremely difficult to reconstruct the exchange mechanisms of the ancient world. Trade in the Near East in the second millennium BC has been only partially reconstructed and that is thanks to the discoveries of important archives of written documentation, such as those at El Amarna, Babylonia, Ugarit or Kanesh. Even so, all this information is insufficient to enable us fully to grasp how trade worked and evolved during that period. In the words of a specialist, it is 'like trying to reconstruct the organization of the tramways using nothing but the information printed on the ticket'.

For the first millennium BC the written documentation concerning trade is much sparser and it is almost non-existent in the Phoenician world. However, a few written references concerning Tyre or the Tyrian enclaves in the west allow us to glimpse the characteristic features of its trade. For the west, and in particular for the Phoenician establishments in southern Spain, reconstruction of trade should preferably be based on the archaeological record. But this entails serious difficulties when it comes to an economic reading of the data.

The distribution and characteristics of the objects that are studied in archaeology are merely the end products of complex systems of production and exchange, and in assessing them it is very often an 'impressionist' view of the spread of trade that predominates. Moreover, some of the methods of archaeology have carried little conviction when it came to interpreting the archaeological record. Not very long ago, mechanisms of commercial exchange in the Aegean were still being inferred from the curve of the fall or growth in the spatial distribution of commodities of trade. Acts of exchange arise in reality from much more complex relations than can be implied by a spatial distribution of this kind. Recently, a few specialists – McC. Adams, Hodder and Orton – have shown clearly the inability of the so-called 'new archaeology' to reconstruct fairly large-scale socio-economic mechanisms such as trade.

In spite of everything, it is possible to attempt a partial reconstruction of the organization of Phoenician trade from the scant documentation in existence and on the basis of the solid mercantile experience of the Asian Near East, about which we have abundant documentation and whose traditions were undoubtedly inherited by Tyre.

An acquaintance with the theories of economic history on the subject of ancient trade in the Near East, then, seems a good reference point from which to start our discussion.

Economic theories of the Substantivist School

Forms of exchange

As a specific institution, the exchange of products is an exponent of the social context in general since it involves all the elements in society. So it can be said that trade is an aspect of social relations and that there exist as many systems of exchange as there are types of society. The more complex the social structure, the more complex will be trade.

As for the economists of the so-called 'substantivist' school of Polanyi and his followers – Dalton, Oppenheim, Renfrew, Zaccagnini and Liverani – they accept three main models nowadays for the way exchange works in primitive and archaic societies, in order of complexity:

(a) Reciprocity: this system lies at the root of movements between symmetrical social groups (Polanyi) and is characteristic of tribal

societies (Sahlins). It involves qualitatively homogeneous or quantitatively superior counterparts. One aspect of reciprocity consists in the exchange of gifts and it is their social or prestige value that is all-important. We find examples of reciprocity in Homer, when he describes aspects of Phoenician and Greek trade in the Aegean; we shall look at this in detail later.

(b) Redistribution: a feature of state or archaic societies (Polanyi) and also of chiefdoms (Sahlins). It involves collecting commodities in a centre and subsequently sending them out again. It requires a centre of social and economic power and is characteristic of highly centralized societies, such as Egypt or Mari. Redistribution takes place through huge systems of central storage – palaces or the like – and there are no counterparts. One aspect of redistribution is a tribute or vassal relationship.

(c) Commercial exchange: this coexists with or is superimposed on the previous two models in primitive chiefdoms and states (Polanyi). It involves equivalent counterparts, the economic function is dominant and it is a relatively peaceful method of obtaining goods in short supply. It is precisely its two-sidedness that ensures peaceful development. There are two basic types of commercial exchange according to Polanyi:
   - Treaty trade, also known as 'adminstered trade', a feature of economies which, as in Phoenicia, make ample use of 'money' and carry on huge exchange activities but in which there is still no clear notion of gain or economic benefit nor of a market proper. This is because prices are fixed beforehand by treaty or prior agreement between the two parties. The institution that administers and regulates the commercial activity and at the same time determines the agreements with the native population in distant lands is the port of trade, also defined as the place where treaty trade develops.
   - Market trade, in which the mechanisms of supply and demand and the concept of price are in operation. This type of trade does not appear before the fourth century BC, according to Polanyi's theory, so that, in principle, it would not be relevant to Phoenician society.

The concept of market

In Polanyi's opinion, the market arises when there are at least a certain number of buyers and sellers, and when the unit price on offer is

affected by the decision of all of them. So it is the market that determines the form trade takes, the use of coinage, the prices, the dealings, the losses and profits.

Elements typical of a market would be private enterprise, risk, profits and earnings, and the fluctuation of prices following changes in supply and demand. The function of market prices would be to regulate the supply of products in relation to the demand and to channel the demand for goods towards the available supply. For all this, the substantivists define the market as a supply–demand–price mechanism. If the conditions of supply (scarcity) or demand change, that change is reflected in the prices and so on, which means that the market is a relatively recent self-balancing and self-regulating mechanism.

The concept of trade without a market or trade adminstered by the state is interesting to us because it was proposed by Polanyi and his school with the so-called 'trading peoples' – Ugarit, Tyre, Carthage – particularly in mind, that is, the peoples who were noted for their almost exclusive dependence on trade, in which the entire population was involved directly or indirectly.

Polanyi was the first to work out a series of categories and theoretical schemes applicable to ancient societies, which is why his work had such repercussions amongst archaeologists, prehistorians and historians of the ancient world. Even today, the principal specialists in ancient trade follow the theories propounded by Polanyi in the fifties. It is the existence or not of a market that in the last resort has been the hallmark of the polemics between those called 'substantivists' – Polanyi and his school – and the formalists, as we shall see.

For the substantivists, a large part of contemporary economic theory is not applicable to primitive and ancient economic systems because the categories used by modern economists have been constructed basically to analyse enormously complex market economies. On the contrary, societies are thought to have existed in which the economy was not regulated by market mechanisms – supply, demand, price – but by other types of institution. If market rules did not exist in the period that directly concerns us, there would have been no system of competitive markets or prices.

The substantivists defend the hypothesis that neither Babylonia nor Tyre, two of the greatest international trading centres of the Near East, was the cradle of the price-making market. The Tyrians would have developed their trade basically through operations fixed by legal arrangements (pacts, treaties) and consequently with no thought of

gain. This type of pre-mercantile trade is what Polanyi defines as 'treaty trade'.

Particularly typical of this type of trade was the organizing of expeditions to distant places to obtain raw materials. Since this trade was very costly, costs had to be reduced by means of compensatory measures, such as, for example, restricting trade to materials of high value produced in very limited areas. In this sense, trade could constitute a formidable economic enterprise in which a privileged sector of the population took part. For that reason, in a situation of pre-mercantile economy, long-distance trade would have to be controlled by the state and subordinated to its interests, according to Polanyi. It was the state that laid down the terms of the exchange and fixed prices. In order to guarantee the mutual security of both parties, this trade needed institutional agreements or previously covenanted treaties.

This type of trade allowed the occasional intervention of merchants who obtained benefits, not in the form of profit on the 'price' of the merchandise but rather as a revenue granted by the state or the monarch.

Ports of trade

The port of trade is the main axis of administered trade and the chief institution of long-distance trade before the appearance of the market. The concept of a *port of trade* was introduced by Revere, Arnold and Chapman into Polanyi's work and later extended by Dalton to designate the place reserved for professional organizations of merchants who developed their activities under the authority of the state. There is no competition beween them because prices are fixed in advance for very long periods of time. Thus the merchants are more like state officials receiving commission than independent traders risking capital and seeking profits.

The port of trade came to be constituted in the long run like a small state located on foreign territory and recognized internationally as neutral. With the advantage of being neutral territory, its importance for international trade was considerable; hence the great political powers always avoided annexing these free cities or free ports and practised a policy of non-intervention so as to enable them to continue functioning as ports of trade. Al Mina, Ugarit, Tyre, Carthage, Danzig, Hong Kong and Dahomey are considered to be classic examples.

During the first millennium BC, a few ports of trade like Tyre were

able to attain the rank of genuine powers on an international scale. At first, however, the port of trade was a great commercial depository with warehouses and subsidiaries, in which merchants were protected, sometimes under the auspices of a sanctuary. The presence of warehouses, some of them sanctuaries, the existence of very few burials – that is to say few residents – and the absence of control of the territory are indications that enable the archaeologist to identify a port of trade. They are the typical features that we find, for example, in Ugarit and Al Mina.

For a port of trade to fulfil all its functions it had to be established on the coast or the banks of a river and it required a prior understanding with the indigenous population, based on treaties regulating facilities for the transport, unloading and storage of merchandise. These treaties fixed the equivalencies so that metal or silver were not needed as a medium of exchange. This would explain, moreover, the resistance of the Phoenicians and Carthaginians to using and adopting a coinage, given that, as 'ports of trade', their cities were never organized as price-making markets. Polanyi thinks that where no market existed, neither coinage nor money could exist.

In the absence of a market, another institution characteristic of long-distance trade would have been a special district outside the walls of the great cities devoted to commercial transactions. In the Near East, this commercial enclave, of which more later, was called *kārum* (port, wharf). The substantivists see this kind of 'market' as a physical location or meeting-place for the exchange of products and it could have existed in Mesopotamia without necessarily adopting the mechanisms of a price-making market.

Only after the fourth century BC would the Greeks have incorporated the idea of profit as an objective, together with a competitive element in the market. Aristotle would have been a direct witness of the birth of the system of price-making markets governed by their own laws: the law of supply and demand.

Polanyi's theory has undoubtedly served to fill a gap in the study of ancient trade and to re-open discussion about the economic systems present in the Near East, which, apparently, do not seem to fit into the categories of a modern economy.

The economic theory of the Formalist School

Those known as 'formalists' – Burling, Leclair, Belshaw, among others – opposed these theories; for them every primitive or archaic society has

competitive procedures, or markets, if you will, and so the categories of modern political economics would be in every way applicable to them. In other words, the concepts and propositions of 'formal' economics, created to explain the phenomena of the market economy, would be applicable in whole or in part to analysis of ancient economies.

Recently too, other anthropologists and specialists in economic history, like Leemans, Meillassoux, McC. Adams, Barceló and Renger, have criticized, from other standpoints, the analytical separation postulated by Polanyi between treaty trade and market trade. These authors consider the division to be overly rigid and the resulting ancient economic activity too compartmentalized into categories. Elements of mercantile trade and treaty trade overlapped and would not necessarily have constituted exclusive, consecutive and ineluctable stages. The distance between one and the other would not have been so well defined nor would it have been so clear that the market generates prices or is the nerve centre of economic activity.

There are discrepancies, too, about the significance of money and minted coinage, which at times confound the substantivists. So, for example, in Babylonia detailed accounts of transactions are expressed in monetary terms on the basis of an accounting system that preceded money as a general medium of exchange. Money, which is not the same as minted coinage, can, in the sense the economists give it, be an abstract entity, a form of credit. In other words, the absence of metal coinage in Babylonia and in Tyre does not necessarily mean that there was not a market system. There would always have been price fluctuations, according to the formalists, and state control of the economy had to be a late phenomenon. What is more, it is now on record that in Mesopotamia market and price fluctuations coexisted with systems of redistribution and reciprocity from the end of the fourth millennium BC.

The formalists and other critics of Polanyi's thesis maintain, furthermore, that a very early interregional trade existed in Mesopotamia, carried on by merchants who obtained profits from it, that the *kārum* could function as a market, with all that that implied, and that silver served as an indirect medium of exchange. These authors likewise postulate that there are market elements in redistributive societies, with demand and speculation on prices; in short, that the state did not always channel goods from the institutional sphere to the private, that there was a need to create a system of equivalencies, that prices, equivalencies and tariffs were expressed in silver and, lastly, that there were

regulation, speculation and fluctuations in prices. All these elements inherent in the notion of market appeared very early in the Near East.

Other recent contributions to the problem of trade in the ancient east

The study of trade cannot be restricted to analysis of a single feature, isolated and extrapolated from the overall social and political structure (Meillassoux). Still less can it be studied as a timeless phenomenon, given that it forms a continuous, dynamic and complex process, in which a host of socio-political and economic factors must be considered. Various recent studies of the social function of the trader, or *tamkārum,* and of the specific role of the oriental *kārum* as a marketplace, have ultimately opened up new channels for research into ancient trade.

The tamkārum *– a cornerstone of trading relations*

In the ancient Near East, commercial trafficking was in the hands of traders, the so-called *tamkāru* (singular: *tamkārum*), an Akkadian word for the businessman *par excellence*. The *tamkārum* was the person charged with commercial exchange, who travelled with his merchandise from place to place and who occasionally operated through commercial representatives or financed the trade of others.

It is known that since the middle of the third millennium, private commercial transactions took place in Mesopotamia, in which a very advanced system of accounting in terms of gold and silver was developed, particularly in long-distance trade. At the same time, there is clear evidence that the temple and the palace devoted themselves very early on to making profits by practising usury or acting as bankers. All this means that much of the trade in Mesopotamia was organized by and for the state, coexisting with private traders.

During the second millennium BC, this 'capitalist' economy appears to be closely linked to long-distance trade, for which we have documents showing strong governmental control yet again – for example, in Ur – or else private initiative – for example, in Sippar.

Very early on, the primitive *tamkārum* became a powerful merchant with a fixed abode and agents abroad; he financed commercial enterprises or granted credit to third parties.

The code of Hammurabi (1792–1750 BC) shows us the Babylonian government and palace participating in trade and using the *tamkāru* as agents. The palace imposes taxes on commerce, grants credit and

maintains mechanisms for controlling trade. In spite of this, it tolerates and stimulates private trade. Contrary to the general opinion of Polanyi and the substantivists, private initiative can be considered as one of the pillars of the economic power of Hammurabi in Babylonia. In the days of this monarch, powerful, independent merchants, financed by private capital, came to dominate the overland trading networks of Mesopotamia.

Many business letters from the *kārum* of Nineveh, Sippar, Ur, Larsa or Babylonia are known. Leemans has studied the official and private archives of the palaeo-Babylonian period in this connection, the royal archives of Mari, the correspondence of Hammurabi with officials in the south, letters from merchants to their agents in Ur, Larsa and Sippar and, lastly, commercial letters from the city of Larsa to enclaves in northern Mesopotamia. With the help of all this correspondence, it has been shown that most of the trade of the period came within the orbit of government. The state provided the capital through a high official, the *wakil tamkāri*, who not only was director of the king's department of trade but also organized the movement of government merchants. Alongside these, a few merchants supplemented government business with private dealings.

Oppenheim puts forward the theory that in the palaeo-Babylonian period, since a market economy did not exist, merchants were grouped in associations of a guild or professional type. These associations came within the sphere of the temple or the palace, which contributed the capital to finance such mercantile organizations. It was only from the second millennium on that the decline of the temple would have favoured the development of private initiative in international trade.

From the fourteenth century BC in Ugarit and other cities of the east, commerce and diplomacy are intermingled. The trader, integrated into the public sector, not only took part in public adminstration but was entrusted by the state with starting up commercial agencies and was commissioned to buy and sell in his capacity as emissary or consul. As a last instance, in Ugarit, much of the responsibility for trade concerned the state, to which taxes were paid by traders on merchandise and by franchises on commercial transactions. In exchange for supplying the royal household, the trader operating in the sphere of the palace was exempt from paying ordinary taxes.

The great Ugaritic merchants had agents or correspondents abroad, or trading partners with whom they kept up a correspondence about

dealings, loans, cases of debt or insolvency. The legal texts found in Ugarit demonstrate that the Ugaritic businessman always moved in the circles of a few privileged families in the city.

But the merchant of Ugarit is not just a commercial agent in the service of the palace, on whose account he performs all his activities. Yet again it is recorded that state trade did not preclude his developing activities on his own account. The *tamkārum*, on his departure on a trading excursion, received a grant from the palace consisting of a quantity of silver, or of merchandise calculated in silver, for which he had to account on his return. It is precisely this grant that distinguishes the commercial agent of the palace from the private merchant.

Moreover, the existence of organizations or 'houses' of merchants in Ugarit is recorded. They travelled on behalf of the palace and coexisted with commercial agents who were acting on their own account. But the existence of an intermediate category of merchants should not be discounted either.

In conclusion we can say that in the Near East a merging of the institutional and public sphere with private activity was usual in any mercantile activity. The balance between the two always depended on the socio-political conditions of the moment, although we might point out that the private space won by the merchants was much more extensive than can be glimpsed through Polanyi's theories. Very often, private initiative was stimulated by the palace itself.

In western Asia, moreover, the trader enjoyed enormous social prestige. In government circles, the merchant always had a high social status, shared in the profits of the palace and occasionally formed part of the royal family. Only thus can we appreciate the significance of the hymn to Enlil, the chief god of the Sumerian pantheon, who is addressed as 'merchant (*dam-gar*) of the vast land'. So the rank of merchant is comparable with that of a god, which would be unthinkable if the merchant had been a subordinate or had not belonged to a dominant class, as will be the case in Greece.

Neither in the east nor in Greece is a 'trading middle class' known; that will be a later and typically European institution. On the contrary we find ourselves faced with the two extremes of the social scale. Thus the trader of low social background will be typical of the Greek world, while he is unknown in the Near East. Very soon the contrast will be seen between the eastern concept of the *tamkārum*, a trader by status and closely linked with the governing class and the institutions of the temple and the palace, and that of the *naukleros* and outsider of ancient

Greece, a merchant from a humble background, displaced and linked with the lower classes from which he comes. The first is a qualified professional and specialist, devoting himself to business and diplomacy, offering credit, owning land and inheriting his position. The second develops trade on a small scale and is undervalued for his work.

The kārum *of Kanesh: an example of a market*

One of the best-known systems for organizing international trade is that of the Assyrian commercial enclaves in Asia Minor during the twentieth to nineteenth centuries BC. This type of commercial enclave, called a *kārum*, has been found in the Hittite capital itself, Hattusas, as well as in Alishar and other Anatolian centres. The best known, however, is the *kārum* at Kültepe, the ancient Kanesh in the region of Cappadocia.

These palaeo-Assyrian colonies in Anatolia have always served as an essential point of reference when analysing the organization of ancient trade in general and are a key element in the polemics that even today divide the economists and historians who support Polanyi's thesis from those who oppose it.

In many Mesopotamian cities there was a port area or suburb outside the walls which functioned as a centre for commercial activity. This zone, the equivalent of an *emporion* or a mediaeval *portus*, which was called a *kārum,* was organized like a marketplace. In the suburbs of the ancient Anatolian city of Kanesh at the beginning of the second millennium, there was an Assyrian enclave, inhabited by businessmen, who, over several generations, grew rich by buying and selling, forming partnerships and lending or investing money. These *tamkāru* acted as intermediaries between the the distant *kārum* of Assur and the subjects of an Anatolian prince, the prince of Kanesh, who ruled over a region rich in copper. This Assyrian commercial diaspora into Cappadocia was due to Assur's need to obtain gold, silver and copper from Anatolia to complement the supply of tin reaching her from Iran.

The Assyrian colonists who settled in Kanesh formed a kind of family enterprise, passed on from father to son and dependent on the *kārum* in Assur. Assur supplied the products, lent the money and invested large sums in return for interest. The thousands of written tablets discovered in Kanesh, which Garelli began studying and transcribing some time ago, support the notion of a corporate and hierarchical organization of highly specialized traders.

Of more than 15,000 written tablets from Kültepe, only some 3,000

have been published so far. And a good part of the theories of Polanyi and his school in favour of treaty trade or marketless trading rests on the first discoveries made in this 'colony' of Assyrian merchants, in which an important documentary archive had been discovered, belonging to three generations of merchants. When Polanyi published his conclusions in 1957, only a tiny part of the archives of Kültepe was known, the part published by Garelli.

Polanyi asserts that the Assyrian merchants in Kanesh were not traders in the sense of people who earn their living from the profits obtained by buying and selling, thanks to the price differential in those transactions, but had merchant status by virtue of birth or by royal appointment. Their incomes were derived from commission or interest. The extraction of copper, which was in Anatolian hands, went on in accordance with equivalencies, and prices were fixed in advance in accordance with those equivalencies.

In short, this was treaty trade, in which the public authorities guarantee all the operations and the merchants are therefore immune from risk. The Assyrian trader restricted himself to stimulating copper extraction by the natives through loans and investments, paying future suppliers in advance. Although the *tamkārum* is an independent agent, the whole operation is a public service and an integral part of state trade. This model of a permanent settlement of traders on foreign territory is directly related to another type of organization of eastern trade: the 'port of trade', which will be associated later with the cities of Ugarit, Sidon, Tyre and Carthage, still in keeping with Polanyi's model.

Recent work undertaken in the *kārum* at Kanesh and the study of fresh written documents from that Anatolian city have made it clear that the Assyrian commercial enclave was a much more complex centre than Garelli or Polanyi could have imagined some time ago. The *kārum,* situated at the foot of the city, included houses and residential districts, not only for Assyrian merchants but also for natives and other foreign traders. One great commercial house (*bit kārum*) was outstanding, along with several firms or branches (*bitum*) controlled by powerful merchant families.

At first it was a male Assyrian population that settled in Kanesh, made up of merchants and their employees, whose families continued to live in Assur. Gradually itinerant traders and commercial agents began buying land in the area, all bringing their families, so that the commercial enclave became a genuine colony.

The exact relationship that existed between the metropolis of Assur and the various Anatolian *kāru* is not known. From the correspondence carried on between the Assyrian merchants in Kanesh and their representatives in Assur we can infer the presence in Cappadocia of veritable merchant dynasties controlling powerful commercial firms. One of these merchants, Imdi-ilum, is a typical businessman with his own archive and agents in Assur who receive commission in return for buying and investing for him. He is a *tamkārum* of high social rank, who travels constantly and from Kanesh controls the caravans and activities of his many agents. Imdi-ilum owns a family firm, probably inherited from his father, he has properties in Assur and keeps his own agents in Konya, a land rich in metals. It is estimated that this typical businessman succeeded in accumulating a veritable fortune in talents of silver.

The new documentation from Kanesh concerning, it should not be forgotten, the second millennium, shows that, alongside certain elements of 'treaty' trade, the vast majority of commercial activities rested on private initiative. There are orders to 'sell at any price', which means that there is risk, there is weighing up of costs, margins of gain and profits. Various allusions to the poor demand for tin, to a fall in prices, to emergency situations at certain times of the year, to the fluctuation of prices and to changes in supply and demand lend credence to the hypothesis of a quite well developed market trade. Silver did indeed function as money, that is to say, as an indirect medium of exchange and it is clear that the merchants of Kanesh were not state employees.

Other recent data also invalidate many of Polanyi's hypotheses about the mutual exclusiveness of state trade and private initiative. We now know, too, that the main objective of the Assyrian enclave in Kanesh was to obtain not copper but gold and silver. The gold and silver were not destined for the Assyrian state but for the pockets of the merchants themselves who, although they paid taxes to the 'city' (Assur), formed a genuine private or 'capitalist' enterprise. In any case, the Assyrians of Cappadocia did not devote themselves to trading in copper and wool because Assyria needed them but because that trade was a means of obtaining more gold and silver. All this activity appears to be financed by great bankers and private investments. Lastly, all the indications point to a dense network of trading posts controlled from Kanesh, which succeeded in linking the Arabian Gulf with Anatolia and Iran through complicated ramifications, and middlemen operating between producers and consumers.

But all this mass of archaeological and literary information, relating to the second millennium, is interrupted almost completely after 1200 BC. This means that to reconstruct the mechanisms of trade in the first millennium, we must rely almost exclusively on the archaeological record and a less exact literary documentation. This lack of documents poses serious difficulties when it comes to analysing the organization of Phoenician trade in general, and discussing the interrelation that existed between the political power and commercial activity in particular. The question once again is to determine which sectors of society ran the Phoenician enterprise in the Mediterranean, whether it was the state or private enterprise, or both at once.

PHOENICIAN TRADE AND ITS FORMS OF ORGANIZATION

The political collapse of 1200 BC in the Near East and the disappearance of the great palatine institutions of the Late Bronze Age gave rise to new models of commercial organization although the solid mercantile traditions of the second millennium were preserved at the same time. A good part of those traditions will be gathered up by Tyre.

The political systems of the Late Bronze Age had been based on big regional units dominated by the palace and a few interregional relations characterized by parity of rank, where political and commercial contacts evolved between royal houses of equivalent rank, that is to say, between 'brothers', in the terminology of the El Amarna letters. The merchants belonged in the sphere of the palace and the trading relations were dominated by exchange of gifts (when addressed to a trading partner) and by tribute (when addressed to partners of lower rank).

In Liverani's opinion (1987) the exchange relationships were subject to very strict rules of play, so that commercial contacts were restricted to adjoining regions (Ugarit–Mycenae, Cyprus–Ugarit and so on), so the Mycenaean region cut out any possibility of direct contact between Asia and Egypt or the central Mediterranean. Consequently, the commercial shipping of the cities in Syria–Palestine had no alternative to the coastal circuits of the eastern Mediterranean. In this context, the metal trade was characterized by a monopolistic concentration of production in easily controlled areas like Cyprus and Egypt, the prerogative of a few interregional exchanges strictly linked to the dominant political system.

Some authors are of the opinion that, unlike the second millennium,

trade in the first millennium was primarily in private hands and that the strategy of Phoenician mercantile activity consisted basically in making profits and creating a demand in the quest for gain. At first the palace would have stimulated commercial activity, holding a monopoly over international trade, only to give way later to individual initiative in matters of commerce. Indeed, the collapse in the year 1200 BC of the Late Bronze Age economies, whose characteristic features had been the concentration in the royal palace of all the tasks of political organization, management, administration and exchange, suggested a generalized disaster for the whole system. Among other things, relationships between the merchant and the palace changed as a result of the dissolution of the categories of specialist personnel and their privileged status. The trader had to stress the private aspect of his activity, adding personal activities to his institutional management in the ambit of the palace and obtaining customs exemptions and freedom of service until he acquired a significant level of autonomy and power.

Another consequence of the crisis, which had a powerful influence on international trade, was the ending of the political and legal guarantees that had covered interregional traffic until then. There was no longer any 'great king' negotiating with his 'brothers' of equal rank, and the insecurity of the trade routes due to piracy, combined with the absence of supporting institutions (the palace) precipitated the end of interregional trade, particularly the high-level trade in the form of exchange of gifts between royal houses, and of the exchange of specialists between states.

The same thing was happening with the metal trade. The disappearance of the palace organization as a centre for the production and redistribution of activities left the trading partners high and dry, forcing them to seek alternative sources of raw materials. In short, the collapse of the Bronze Age palaces, which were the main and almost exclusive agents of long-distance trade, produced a generalized crisis among interregional contacts as the genuine leaders of trade – kings, scribes, ambassadors, palace merchants, specialists – disappeared following the dissolution of the political and legal organization of commerce.

As far as the supply of metals is concerned, important changes can be observed at the beginning of the Iron Age. The ties of the preceding period having disappeared, the commerce of the day initiated a strategy aimed at gaining direct access to the distant regions of production, previously inaccessible, and at increasing metal production on a local

scale. Direct exploitation and trade thus replaced the exchange of gifts and tribute. The palace ceased to be the exclusive agent of trade and made way for a kind of commercial aristocracy in the Phoenician cities of the coast. Only so can we interpret the voyage to Phoenicia of Wen-Amon, an envoy from Egypt who was charged with obtaining merchandise and money in place of the annual tribute that Egypt imposed in other times on the vassal kings of Syria–Palestine. Compulsory trade, based on payment of tribute, gave way to mercantile activity in the hands of private agents. The key lies in the change in the status of the merchant: from being a palace official, whose job was to supply goods that were not accessible locally, he came to be a person who intervened only to make profits.

An analysis by Liverani of the commercial terminology of the period reveals interesting tendencies and even semantic changes in connection with the new situation created in the east at the start of the Iron Age. So, for example, in the Bronze Age the binomial *môtar/mahsor* alludes to the annual balances drawn up by the palace administration and the merchants with the meaning 'excess/deficit'. In the first millennium BC the same words come to mean 'profit/loss'. The root *kly*, which in the Late Bronze Age means 'to consume', in the Iron Age is synonymous with 'to spend'. The term *mhr*, 'equivalence', comes to designate 'price'; *mkr*, 'exchange', comes to mean 'sell' and terms arise that did not exist in the Bronze Age, like *rkl* and *shr*, 'travelling salesman'.

So at the time when the concepts of profits and earnings were arising in place of the concepts of generosity and unselfishness typical of the exchange of gifts, a mercantile oligarchy, necessarily associated with private activity, would have progressively supplanted the palace in the management of long-distance trade. In Tyre, the rise of this oligarchy would have shifted the epicentre of trade towards the Mediterranean and would be responsible for the institutionalization of the colonies. The many divergences that would be seen in the Phoenician enclaves in the west would actually be due to different trading circuits, that is, to the activity of many centres directing the organization of trade. On the other hand, only a private initiative would have been capable of seeking new incentives for trade and of opening new metal routes in the west, which would have been unthinkable from the state sphere.

As we shall see later, the mercantile oligarchy of Tyre and Byblos was not only present from the outset in all the commercial initiatives of the Phoenician cities, but the fact that the written sources hardly mention the private sector in the commercial transactions of the

Phoenician world in the first half of the first millennium does not authorize us to assert that there would have been no independent trade. From the available documentation, which we shall go on to discuss, we can infer a very active role for the monarchy in the organization of trade (Wen-Amon's story; the prophesies of Ezekiel), the presence of solidly organized oligarchic elites (Wen-Amon, the treaty of Baal and Asarhadon) and a private trade more akin to piracy than to mercantile activity proper (Homer).

Merchants, princes and shipowners

Wen-Amon's story

All the indications are that in the twelfth to tenth centuries BC the organization of Phoenician trade was subject to the political power, and in this respect it was closer to the Late Bronze Age structures – Ugarit – than to those of the Iron Age. This hypothesis seems to be supported by the account given by Wen-Amon, in which, among other things, the Egyptian envoy attempts to obtain supplies direct from the royal palace of Byblos. Furthermore, King Zakarbaal possessed a strong administrative organization, held a monopoly in the exploitation of wood and controlled the port and the territorial waters. In short, at the beginning of the Iron Age the palace seemed to constitute an institution capable of managing commercial activity, the supply of raw materials and the trade routes by means of legal and fiscal prerogatives over the coastal ports (Appendix 1).

The king of Byblos, Zakarbaal or Sicharbas, boasts to Wen-Amon that he possesses fifty coastal vessels (*br*) anchored in the port of Sidon and another twenty passenger or cargo (*mnš*) ships in the port of Byblos. So the complement of Byblos' merchant fleet is considerable if we remember that the account refers to the first half of the eleventh century BC.

Of particular interest, however, is what this account tells us about the way trade was organized. Zakarbaal explains to Wen-Amon that the twenty ships in Byblos trade in *ḥbr* or *ḥubŭr* with Smendes of Egypt and that the fifty ships lying in Sidon are in *ḥubŭr* with one Wrktr, or Urkatel, a resident of Tanis (Fig. 28).

In Wen-Amon's account, the term *ḥubŭr* thus occurs twice, once in relation to a Phoenician prince or merchant living in Egypt. The term, which has equivalents in Ugaritic and in Hebrew (II Chronicles 20:35–37), has been translated as community, guild, syndicate, com-

Fig. 28 Phoenician ship. Bas-relief from the palace of Sennacherib in Nineveh (*c.* 700 BC)

mercial chain, firm, company, association or consortium. For the majority of the authors who have studied the etymology of the word, the exact meaning would be syndicate, company or trading partnership, similar to the Hebrew *ḥ-b-r* or *ḥabbar,* used to designate an association or guild of merchants (Job 40:25). Consequently, the twenty ships of the king of Byblos would be in trading partnership with King Smendes, in the manner of the joint enterprises of Hiram and Solomon or, later, like the *ḥubŭr* of Jehosaphat and Ahaziah. Indeed, the kings Ahaziah of Israel and Jehosaphat of Judah set up a *ḥubŭr* in the ninth century BC with the object of resuming the voyages to Ophir initiated by their forebear Solomon (I Kings 22:48; II Chronicles 20:35). All Jehosaphat was doing was to adopt a Phoenician model of a merchants' consortium traditionally used for joint large-scale shipping enterprises under the protection of the monarchy. The profits or losses in an enterprise of this kind could be so high that it was necessary to join forces under state management.

In Wen-Amon's story, the fifty coastal vessels lying in Sidon were not in partnership with another monarch but with Urkatel or Werket-El. The fact that he had a fleet of fifty merchant ships could only mean that Urkatel was a powerful merchant very close to the royal house of

Byblos and wielding, perhaps, more economic power than the king himself.

The presence of the powerful Urkatel suggests that there may have existed in Phoenicia from earliest times a highly developed private commerce, operating in circles very close to the palace or directly subordinate to the royal house. In that case, the *ḥubŭr* might be organized corporations or shipping consortia running a regular trade between the Phoenician coast and Egypt and operating with complete autonomy under the protection of a wealthy man.

To judge by other biblical references, these merchant companies must have come into being in response to the need for protection against piracy and their function must have consisted in providing the necessary capital to build and equip merchant ships and ensure their protection against pirates, risks and losses. Various allusions in the Old Testament confirm these examples of maritime consortia, for example, between the king of Tyre and the 'kings of the islands' (Ezekiel 27:35).

Wen-Amon's account makes it quite clear that during the eleventh century BC the international trade developed by the Phoenician cities possessed several mercantile organizations operating under the protection of powerful 'princes' – Smendes of Egypt, Urkatel, the king of Byblos himself – who possessed important merchant fleets and who, on occasions, lived in distant lands or kept permanent representatives in foreign ports. The existence of these shipping consortia or commercial firms, run by powerful shipowners like Urkatel, who provided capital and had commercial agents or partners and branches abroad, is already recorded in Ugarit, where these personages normally appear attached to the palace.

Even when these merchants appear to operate independently and organize their own voyages, the words of Zakarbaal suggest a trade very close to the orbit of the king and coexisting with the merchant fleet of the king of Byblos. The idea, therefore, of private trade invading the domain of state trade from the tenth century BC on, that is after the reign of Hiram I, does not tally with the interpretation of Wen-Amon's story. At first the two spheres of trade were complementary and, in one way or another, came within the protective orbit of the palace.

We are undoubtedly dealing with a mercantile elite on whose successes and enterprises the wealth of Tyre depended. They were certainly the great 'men of the city', as described in the Ugaritic texts of

the fourteenth century and whom we always find very close to power. From the biblical and Ugaritic references we can infer that these commercial firms pivoted, in the manner of the *kārum* at Kanesh, around family clans, guilds of merchants and 'houses', as the Old Testament calls them, including the most powerful, 'the house of the king'. This can be deduced from the famous verse in Isaiah (23:8): 'Tyre, the crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth.'

Zakarbaal mentions a Council of State in the city of Byblos, which may have acted, among other things, as a board of commercial management, presided over by the king and by the 'princes of the sea' (Ezekiel 26:16). In any case, we know that later, during the seventh to third centuries BC, the power of the king centred round a Council of Elders, the 'suffetes', who, in both Tyre and Carthage, formed part of the city oligarchy.

We do not know how this advisory council of the king's worked nor what exactly were its powers. In this respect, the treaty signed by Asarhadon and King Baal of Tyre in the seventh century BC is significant, in that the merchant fleet of Tyre was the property partly of the king and partly of the 'elders of the country', that is, of the shipowners and merchant princes.

In the tenth century BC, the written sources concerning the times of Hiram and Solomon refer to an exclusively state trade. The palace of Hiram I managed international exchanges, had rights of ownership over timber, and sent its own specialist workforce to the king of Israel (1 Kings 5:6–10; 7:13). In return, the oil and grain supplied by Solomon went directly into the possession of the palace of Tyre. Everything seems to indicate that the royal palace was then the vital axis of the Tyrian economy. The state dimension in the joint shipping enterprise of Tyre and Israel shows clearly to what extent the state was behind the great international undertakings of Tyrian trade. It must, however, be borne in mind that there is no information in existence about other forms of commercial organization at this period. The agreement signed by Hiram and Solomon is a formula typical of commercial treaties between royal houses and envisages the exchange of gifts and ambassadors such as we know in the Near East from the days of El Amarna. It would be ingenuous to suppose that the enterprise in the Red Sea and Ophir embraces all the trade carried on in the tenth century.

From the ninth to eighth centuries on, this whole scenario underwent substantial changes. Stemming from the Assyrian expansion,

we witness the massive arrival in western Asia of the private element in the sphere of commerce, coinciding, in the opinion of some authors, with a considerable decline in the part played by the Phoenician palace and monarchy in economic activity. Still according to this hypothesis, the development of private initiative would explain why, in the west, the original trading posts began changing into genuine colonies in the eighth and seventh centuries BC. In Israel, too, the private sector would have invaded trade after the reign of Solomon, at the expense of the traditional part played by the monarchy.

The available written information does not at present allow us to subscribe to a change of this nature in Phoenicia from the ninth century. Even in Assyria, where the written sources are much more explicit, the question of whether or not there was private trade and, if so, whether it was more important that the public sector remains highly controversial.

In our view, the essential question is not whether Phoenician trade in the ninth to seventh centuries was basically a private or a state undertaking. In the Near East in general, and in Phoenicia in particular, public trade and private initiative, almost always associated with the search for profits and the desire for gain, were perfectly complementary. It was a synchronous process in which both the private sector and the palace were looking for profits and in which the palace needed the private merchant as much as the trader needed the protection of the palace.

But we also know that from the ninth century BC till the neo-Babylonian period, a large part of long-distance overland trade was in the hands of independent Tyrian merchants operating on a large scale through agents and branches in Babylonia, Ur and Uruk and supplying textiles, perfumes, copper and iron to the chief Mesopotamian cities.

We also find hints of private trade in Phoenicia in the correspondence of an official of Tiglatpileser in charge of the Phoenician coast who, at the end of the eighth century BC, tells the Assyrian king that he has allowed the 'people of Sidon' to trade and work the wood of the Lebanon in exchange for not selling it to the Palestinians and Egyptians, potential enemies of Assyria.

In the seventh to sixth centuries BC, merchants and craftsmen are again known to be circulating freely in the east and they sometimes appear organized into professional associations rather like guilds.

Even in the days of Nebuchadnezzar II, in Babylonia, the leader of the palace merchants is a high functionary (*rab tamkāri*) called Hanunu or Hanon, a typical name of Phoenician derivation.

The only diplomatic document we know from later than the tenth century BC referring to Tyre shows yet again that the organization of Phoenician trade at the beginning of the seventh century BC does not differ substantially from that described in Wen-Amon's story from the eleventh century BC. Indeed, the treaty signed between Asarhadon and King Baal of Tyre, dated around 670 BC, refers explicitly to the 'ships of Baal' and to the ships of 'the people of Tyre', on which sailing restrictions were imposed. So there are two categories of merchant ships, those of the royal house and those of the great merchants of Tyre. It is not difficult to imagine that these 'people of Tyre', like the 'people of Sidon, Arvad and Byblos' who take part in the Tyrian enterprises (Ezekiel 27:8–24), are the 'merchant princes' of Isaiah, that mercantile oligarchy close to the palace from which Urkatel and other 'great Phoenician traders' came.

The commercal orbit of Tyre in the texts of the Hebrew prophets

The maritime power and international importance of Tyre made that city the object of many prophesies and oracles from the prophets of Israel, who, rather than proclaiming it, seem to be wishing for its final destruction. Outstanding among the texts most rich in information and, at the same time, most disturbing, are the famous laments for Tyre, the work of Isaiah and Ezekiel.

Of the oracles against Tyre, the most ancent is that of Isaiah, a prophet who lived between the late eighth and early seventh centuries BC. The oracle against Tyre, which, it must not be forgotten, contains later interpolations into the text, occupies the whole of Chapter 23 of the book of Isaiah (Appendix II).

Isaiah

Isaiah's prophecy falls into two quite distinct parts: the first (vv. 1–14) which evokes past days of glory and decline in the city, and the last (vv. 15–17), which is notable for the messianic announcement according to which, after seventy years of silence, Tyre will be restored and will resume the commercial traffic of yore.

Verses 1–14 are particularly interesting in that they announce the destruction of Tyre by the will of Yahweh and contain one of the most

ancient references to the 'ships of Tarshish', famous for transporting riches, as they did in the days of Hiram I.

In Isaiah's prophecy, Tyre is synonymous with arrogance, beauty, luxury and pride and her past greatness is compared with her present condition: the ports closed, the court abandoned, the coast devastated and Sidon no longer dominant but oppressed; and all this by divine punishment.

Some authors relate the destruction thus announced to the conquest by Asarhadon in 677 BC, although most experts prefer to connect the oracle of Isaiah with the campaign of Sennacherib against the coast and with his victory over King Luli of Tyre in the year 701 BC, or with Asurbanipal's offensive (668–626 BC). The fact is that the disaster foretold by the prophet did not happen. Isaiah would probably have been writing in unsettled times and in a period when Tyre was seriously threatened with destruction during the reigns of Salmanasar V, Sargon II and Sennacherib: Isaiah himself would have been a witness and a contemporary of these threats.

The prophecy is presented in the form of a lament by the ships of Tarshish when, returning from Chittim, they find Tyre destroyed by the will of Yahweh in order to humble her pride (vv. 6–9). The prophet's description speaks of a city, Tyre, controlling the trade of all the nations, the market of the nations (v. 2) and whose ships cross all the seas. Her merchants form an aristocracy, since they are princes (*šarim*) and are the greatest of the earth (v. 8). These merchants arrive in distant lands where they settle for a while (v. 7). Distant lands must not be taken to mean the colonies in the west, since the geographic orbit of Tyre's trade in Isaiah is restricted to the eastern Mediterranean: Egypt, Chittim and Tarshish.

To the prophet it is obvious that trade was the main motive for Phoenician activity at sea and that Tyre was famous among her neighbours for her extraordinary riches and economic power.

Ezekiel

The second great prophetic text about Tyre, that of Ezekiel, presents us with information of incalculable value about Tyre's trade and zones of economic influence, so much so that it is considered to be one of the most relevant sources of information for reconstructing the Phoenician economy in the days of the Mediterranean expansion (Appendix II).

Ezekiel was a prophet deported to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar in

597 BC. It is thought that he wrote his oracles around 586 BC, that is at the beginning of the Exile, so his prophecies against Tyre would reflect a political situation from the beginning of the sixth century BC.

In fact, Ezekiel was describing the destruction of Tyre and formulating his oracle at the precise moment when Tyre was being besieged by Nebuchadnezzar. Nevertheless, reasonable doubts exist about the authenticity of the work and whether this prophet was really deported to Babylon. Various experts are of the opinion that Ezekiel lived in reality at the end of the seventh century BC and that his work was not compiled in the form we know today until the fifth to fourth centuries BC. In the opinion of other authors, the prophecy of the destruction of Tyre refers to events that took place before the year 732 BC so it would reflect a situation more relevant to the ninth to eighth centuries BC. Lastly, some experts are of the opinion that Ezekiel, who must have known the city of Tyre perfectly well, wrote his prophecy in exile in Babylon, taking his inspiration from an Akkadian canticle of the day, the *Poem of Erra*, which displays many elements in common with his prophecy. In any case, the controversies around the authenticity of Ezekiel's work arise from the very text itself, contained in Chapters 26–27, in which unity of composition is strikingly lacking.

In effect, the central poem about Tyre appears to be divided into two parts by a passage in prose (Chap. 27 vv. 12–24), in which an account is given of all the nations trading with Tyre and a list of the principal merchandise arriving in her port. This passage contrasts with the rest of the prophecy, which seems to be written in verse and in which Tyre is compared allegorically to a ship.

It is thought that whoever was responsible for writing these verses, it was not Ezekiel, and that the anonymous author did no more than transcribe and copy an old poem describing a situation which, moreover, is wrong for the beginning of the sixth century BC. The passage is in effect extraneous to the general context of Chapter 27 and there are also linguistic arguments which invalidate the supposed unity and suggest that it does not belong to the original book.

The passage in prose, which Ezekiel himself may perhaps have heard in Babylonia, gathers together the fragments of an ancient Tyrian poem, rediscovered in the neo-Babylonian period. In these verses that include the catalogue of the nations trading with Tyre, mention is made, among others, of Judah, Damascus and Israel, states which, at the time of Ezekiel, had long been under Assyrian domination, so it is unlikely that they could provide Tyre with the many

luxury products the prophet describes. To sum up, the prose part of Chapter 27 would refer to a period before Assyrian domination over Judah, Israel and Damascus, perhaps corresponding to the period of Ithobaal's reign and so to the period of the greatest expansion of Tyre's trade in the east, during the ninth to eighth centuries BC.

In general, it can be said that the description Ezekiel gives of Tyre on the eve of the Babylonian siege is today a unique document for the economic history of the period. So it is worthwhile analysing the two parts of the prophecy separately: the part in verse, describing the commercial greatness of the city shortly before its fall and in which Tyre appears in metaphoric form as a great ship about to be wrecked; and the passage in prose which includes a roll-call of the nations maintaining trading relations with Tyre and the imports arriving periodically at her port.

The prophecy concerning Tyre begins in Chapter 26, where the city appears to be impregnable, built on a rocky island with its port open to the ships and merchandise of all the nations. Tyre is the chief commercial intermediary between the Asian continent and the Mediterranean, a bridge between the nations and so coveted by the great powers of the interior. In the poem, Tyre stands majestic, regal, almost mythical, and a gigantic chorus of islands and shores appears on the stage, summoned by the voice of the prophet. The greatness of her splendour will be matched by the greatness of her fall.

At the sound of Tyre's fall, the islands and shores will tremble, all the princes of the sea will descend from their thrones and the cities which had glorified her name will shake with the terror inspired by her (26:15–18). This general mourning no doubt reflects Tyre's hegemony over the sea and over the territories governed by princes, and the renown of her trade on an international level.

The best-known text of Ezekiel is Chapter 27, to which we have already alluded and which contains his second prophecy against Tyre. The city is represented as a ship, commanded by expert sailors and protected by brave warriors, to the equipping of which all the nations of the earth had contributed (27:3–11). We should point out that the comparison with a great ship which finally founders at sea in the midst of a political storm is a well-known literary device in the form of a metaphor, intended to reinforce the devastating image of a city engulfed in a violent tidal wave.

The prophecy begins by detailing the commercial links possessed by Tyre, situated at the entrance to the sea and enthroned on her two har-

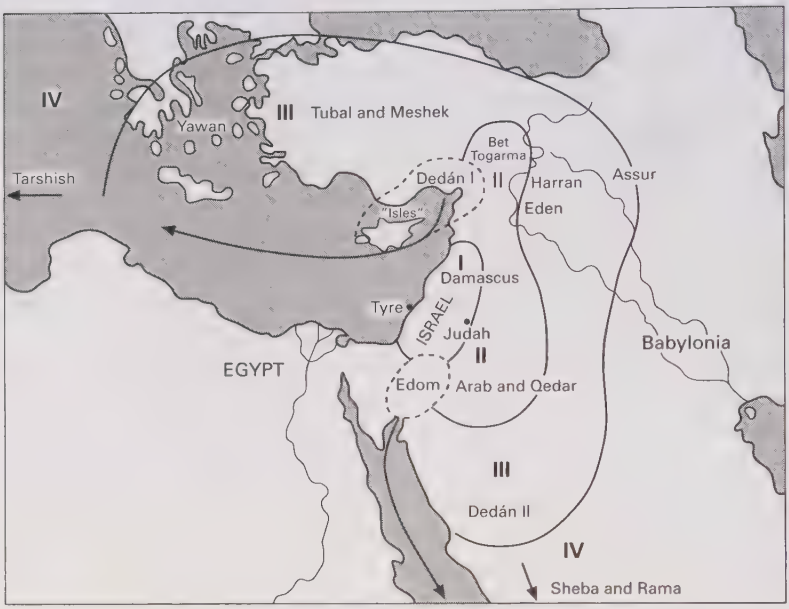
bours (vv. 1–3). Her market, in which innumerable peoples of the coast converge, is what gives her international status. Tyre is a ship loaded with riches, built of cedar and fir trees from Senir (Mount Hermon) and from Lebanon, decked out with purple, blue and red from Alishah (Cyprus) and Yawan (Greece) and bearing linen sails brought from Egypt (vv. 4–7). The ship is manned by oarsmen from Sidon and Arvad and experts from Byblos repair any damage (vv. 8–9). In short, the chief Phoenician cities work for Tyre and the most important cities on earth trade with her. In that sense, verses 1–11 of Chapter 27 of Ezekiel reflect the scope of the internal functioning of Tyrian trade at the beginning of the sixth century (Fig. 29).

The end of the lament expresses all the economic and political weight of Tyre at that period, linked to every nation through trade, and her power redounding to the ends of the earth (vv. 25–36).

The celebrated passage in prose, contained in verses 12–24, is still more eloquent. Once more the geographic horizon reflected by the prophet or his interpolator is restricted to Anatolia, Arabia, Egypt and Cyprus. In it the chief nations trading with Tyre are made known with the type of commodities that are exchanged commercially, giving their origin and content. The value of this information lies not just in the minute description of the products imported by Tyre but in the reconstruction of a number of commercial networks which should probably be situated at a time very close to that of the Tyrian expansion to the west.

Tarshish is mentioned as holding a monopoly in the metal trade – silver, iron, tin and lead – in the eastern Mediterranean, referring probably to some unspecified territory in Asia Minor. It is followed by Yawan, Tubal and Meshek, which supply mainly horses and slaves. Yawan designates the Greek islands of Cyprus and the Cilician coast, that is to say Ionia, and Tubal would correspond to Akkadian Tabalu in Asia Minor, perhaps in the central Taurus area. Meshek is usually associated with the Akkadian Mušku, the country of the Muṣri, between Armenia and Cilicia, which would correspond to the biblical Miṣraim, where as early as the tenth century BC Solomon obtained horses (1 Kings 10:28–29). Lastly the text mentions Bet Togarma, which supplies Tyre with horses, bloodstock and mules.

It can be said that the first part of the list of partners or nations trading with Tyre (vv. 1–3) reflects a commercial network embracing Cilicia, Armenia and the Ionian isles and coincides exactly with the



Band I – AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS
Judah and Israel: wheat, honey, oil, resin
Damascus: wine

Band II – LIVESTOCK PRODUCTS
Damascus: wool
Arab and Qedar: horses and sheep
Bet Togarma: horses and mules

Band III – CRAFT PRODUCTS (and slaves)
Yawan, Tubal, Meshek: slaves, bronze implements
Dedán II: saddles
Edom: purple and embroidered cloth
Eden, Harran, Assur: textiles, cordage

Band IV – EXOTIC PRODUCTS, METALS
Tarshish: silver, iron, tin, lead
Sheba and Rama: fragrances, gold, precious stones
*Dedán I and the many islands: ivory, ebony
*Edom: coral, turquoise, rubies

*Intrusions of the outer bands into the terminals of the sea routes

Fig. 29 Main products of exchange in Tyrian trade in Ezekiel

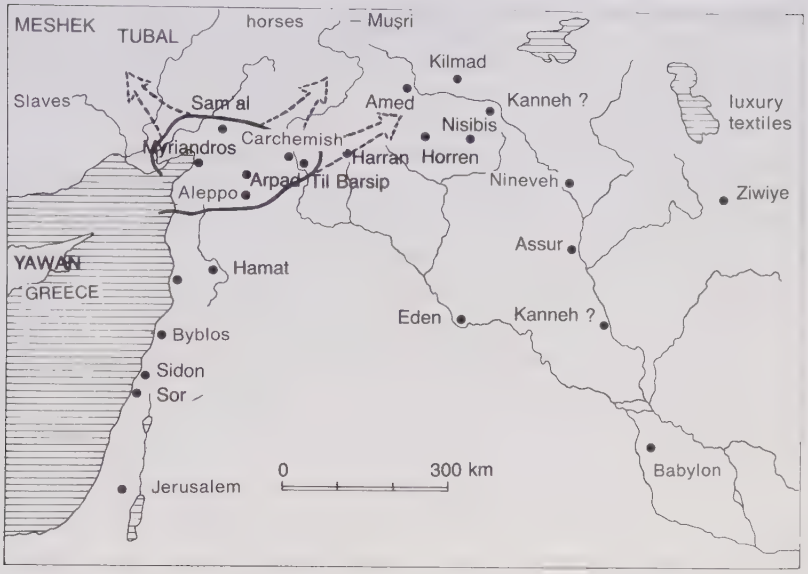


Fig. 30 Extent of Tyrian trade in the Near East after the text of Ezekiel

trading circuit of North Syria, Cappadocia and the Gulf of Alexandretta, which, as we know, Tyre controlled during the ninth century BC (Fig. 30).

There follows a mention of the sons of Rodon (Rhodes), who provide Tyre with ivory and ebonite, Edom or Aram in the Syrian hinterland, who supply garnet, purple cloth and rubies, Judah and Israel who export oil and grain and, lastly, Damascus, which sends Tyre wine and wool (vv. 15–18). After mentioning Uzal, Sheba (probably Saba in Arabia) and Rama, in southern Arabia, who trade in spices and precious stones, the text ends by citing Harran, Kanneh, Eden, Assur and Kilmad (v. 13), countries producing luxury cloth and which we should probably situate to the east of the Euphrates – Harran, Kanneh, Eden – and on the Armenian Tigris – Kullimeri.

Tyre, then, operates worldwide and her products enjoy universal demand, while at the same time the whole known world furnishes her with every kind of commodity. It is trade on a grand scale by sea and by land, using routes that head basically eastwards and had been opened up by Hiram I. In short, it is international trade of great scope in which the political institutions had inevitably to intervene as the ultimate guarantors of its success.

Allusion is made, moreover, to the great market in Tyre (v. 18), which may perhaps be a reference to the place of exchange near the port, in the Eurychoros (big place), the building of which tradition ascribes to Hiram (Fl. Josephus, *Ant Ind.* 8:145).

A number of recent studies on the text of Ezekiel appear to indicate that all these far-flung powers who traded with Tyre acted as her 'agents', that is to say as part of a vast mercantile organization in which commercial agents under the direct tutelage of Tyre would be working for her in their own countries of origin. Indeed, in the original text, the nations are called *sohar* or *rokel,* equivalent to the *tamkārum* of the second millennium, and in this case they seem to be directly dependent on the king of Tyre. This means that Ezekiel's text is not referring to nations as such, but to agents of Tyre acting as intermediaries with those nations.

The first thing that stands out from the geographical picture described by the prophet is the secondary importance of seaborne trade (Tarshish, Yawan) in comparison with overland trade, which embraces the whole of western Asia. The great empires like Egypt and Babylon are not mentioned and, in Liverani's opinion, this would demonstrate that the account refers to a time when these two powers were in confrontation, in the years 619–590 BC, leaving a void that was seized on by Tyre in order to extend her commercial sphere. If so, the commercial set-up described by Ezekiel would not reflect Tyre's commercial range in general, but rather an enterprise that was very limited in time, between the end of the seventh and the beginning of the sixth century, that is to say between the fall of Nineveh (612 BC) and the start of Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Tyre (585 BC).

The list of commodities given in Ezekiel's text is a mixture of luxury products and subsistence goods, although, surprisingly, there is no mention of copper. Maybe the supply of copper for the Tyrian workshops was not a matter of preferential trading. Surprising, too, is the absence of Cyprus, the great copper producer and ally of Tyre in this international trade, an absence that some people interpret as indicating that there were problems on the copper trade route in the first half of the first millennium. In any case, what we can gather from Ezekiel's text is that it was not Tyre that worked for trade but it was international trade that worked for Tyre.

Pirates and traders: the Phoenician trade in Homer

Professional trade

An exceptionally important source in evaluating other aspects of Phoenician trade is Homer, whose texts confine themselves to describing a situation in the Aegean, without being greatly concerned to seek the causes or institutional background of this seafaring trade.

Homer's texts and his Trojan cycle reflect Greek society in contact with these eastern navigators for the first time and describe geopolitical conditions in a state of constant flux. Thus, for example, in the *Iliad*, the Phoenicians are expert craftsmen in metal and in luxury textiles, their exceptional talents as sailors are appreciated and they appear in the Aegean on very rare occasions. The *Odyssey*, composed two or three generations after the *Iliad*, describes the Phoenicians as already dominant at sea, in conflict with the Greeks, and sees them as traders and pirates who appear much more frequently in Greek waters.

Phoenician trade in Homer is not organized trade but individual enterprise, attempting to open up markets in Greece, offering wares to the highest bidder and, above all, seeking profits. The trade is small in volume, carried on by merchant ships that pursue other complementary activities, such as carrying passengers and trafficking in slaves. We see these merchants frequenting the ports of Lemnos, Pilos, Ithaca, Syros, Crete, Libya and Egypt.

The situation described by Homer is more akin to casual trade than to regular commerce with colonies or trading posts throughout the Mediterranean. There is no mention of colonies or permanent Phoenician settlements, nor, indeed, of the Greek city state. On the contrary, Phoenician trade frequently appears associated with management by her monarchs and with the practice of gifts and hospitality. Hence it reflects an atmosphere very close to the start of Tyrian expansion westwards, that is, a situation more appropriate to the ninth century than to the eighth and seventh centuries BC, which is the period when the epics of Homer were being written.

Another aspect to be borne in mind is the Homeric attitude to trade and traders or, in other words, to the Phoenicians. Unlike the Near East or mediaeval Europe, ancient Greece considered trade to be incompatible with the Greek concept of aristocracy and ethics. The ethics of Homer forbid the practice of commerce as a profession, for social rather than economic reasons. In the Greek world, the professional trader had a very low social status and belonged to a despised

social class. The Homeric noble ideal assumes that goods are acquired through looting and piracy, hence the completely negative attitude seen in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* to trade and traders and, by extension, to the Phoenicians. Their unpopularity would persist in Greece until the classical period. In the Athens of the fifth to fourth centuries BC, mercantile activity is dishonourable, both for the merchant trafficking on his own account, the *emporós*, and for the owner of a merchant ship, the *nauklerós*, and also for the exporter engaged in seafaring expeditions, or *endokós*.

In Homer trade is left to foreigners. In reality, the external trade of the Greek cities appears to be in the hands of the Phoenicians – the 'Sidonians' – the foreigners who are not always well received and, as such, are untrustworthy. The words addressed to Odysseus suffice to give an idea of the negative image of the trader in general: 'You seem to be a skipper of a merchant crew rather than a trained athlete' (*Od.* 8:145–164). And before the court of Antinous, Ulysses had to defend himself against the suspicion of being still worse, namely 'a merchant seeking to snatch profits'.

Homer's contempt for the merchant and his homonym, the Phoenician merchant, has deep roots of a social and ideological nature which must be linked with the great political crisis of the Greek aristocracy, of which Homer and Hesiod were witnesses. Trade in general, and Phoenician trade in particular, apparently played an important part in the way the crisis was managed. Let us look briefly at the way this process unfolded.

In Greece, the crisis in ancient trade implies the end of trading by aristocratic exchange, linked to the landowning oligarchy, called *prexis* trade by Homer and *ergon* trade by Hesiod. The aristocratic trade was essentially private and evolved as a complementary activity to agriculture, tending toward trade in slaves, wine, oil and metals. This trade, conditioned by the agricultural cycle, was confined to the summer season, the dead season for agriculture. Hesiod, in the seventh century BC, dubs the period from 25 October to 5 May an unsuitable time for seafaring and observes in his book 'The labours and the days' that it is desirable to set out on a voyage in the fifty days following the summer solstice.

As true mouthpieces of the aristocracy, Homer and Hesiod claim that piracy is an honourable activity, especially as an alternative to trade (*Iliad* 11:328–331), a defence that would be taken up later by Aristotle and Thucydides (1:5, 2). This activity, also performed by the

Phoenicians and the Euboeans (*Iliad* 23:744; *Od.* 13:272), appears in Homer to be directly related to trafficking in slaves. This piratical *prexis* trade was occasionally indulged in by warships for commercial purposes and lasted on in the Mediterranean until the end of the seventh century BC. One known example of the aristocratic merchant is Colaios of Samos, who visited Tartessos at the end of that century.

The crisis in this type of trade is attributed to the gradual development of a non-aristocratic, specialized trade in the hands of professionals – the *emporós* – which burst on Greece in the form of foreign, that is Phoenician, trade. At first the Greek word *emporós* designated a traveller or passenger in a ship belonging to another person, or else a Greek merchant who had no ship of his own. In the days of Hesiod, the word became the name for a specialized activity, the *emporie* trade, which breaks with the self-sufficiency of aristocratic trade by making commercial activity for the first time autonomous with respect to shipping activity in general. Very soon *emporós,* severely criticized by Hesiod, came to designate the trader *par excellence* who ventures forth to sea, even in spring.

In Homer, *emporie* trade is still something alien to the aristocratic world and appears for the first time associated with an external factor: the Phoenicians.

These latter appear haunting the ports of the Aegean, where they trade in slaves and wine, and reserve special honours for the local lord. Their craftwork and their finest and most delicate ornaments, such as the multi-coloured cloth, the work of 'Sidonian' women, are admired. Paris himself is said to have acquired a piece of this cloth in Sidon to give to Helen before carrying her off to Troy (*Iliad* 6:289). Their technical skill and their mastery as workers in gold and bronze are likewise admired.

But above all, the Phoenicians are the trading people *par excellence*, sailing from one end of the known world to the other and spending a whole year in selling their cargo (*Od.* 15:455). The Phoenicians are pirates and ravishers of women and they monopolize seaborne trade. Homer does not attach too much importance to these commercial activities, nor is he interested in the profit, since they are not Greeks. 'They are fine sailors, but rogues' (*Od.* 15: 415–416).

Of special interest for the study of the Phoenicians' commercial organization is the episode narrated to Ulysses on his arrival in Ithaca by the swineherd, Eumaeus. Aristocratic by birth, Eumaeus had been kidnapped and subsequently sold as a child by Phoenician merchants

at the instigation of a slave woman from Sidon, 'a city rich in bronze' (*Od.* 15:415–428). This episode takes place on the island of Syrie, perhaps Syros, where a group of Phoenicians had arrived bearing articles of adornment, necklaces, jewels and gewgaws, articles that Homer calls *athyrmata* (*Od.* 15:459). The Phoenicians remained for a whole year in the port of Syrie in order to reload their ship with other merchandise, taking advantage of the delay to kidnap the king's son, Eumaeus.

In the same way, Ulysses tells that in Egypt he fell in with a rascally, thieving Phoenician, who prevailed on him to journey with him to Phoenicia, where he had property and a house (*Od.* 14:287–300). When the fine season came round, he put him aboard his ship with the intention of selling him as a slave in Libya. As they passed Crete, Ulysses managed to escape.

So we see the Phoenicians travelling freely through Greek waters and we know of prolonged calls in Syros or in Egypt and of a regular trade with Libya. And we have a Phoenician merchant, who owns his own ship and a house and property in his country, who deals in slaves in the springtime, gets good returns and plies the route from Phoenicia via Crete and Egypt to Libya.

The episode in the port of Lemnos, included in the *Iliad*, is of the utmost interest to us since it allows us to guess at Phoenician trading practices, which are very similar to exceedingly ancient forms of exchange (*Iliad* 23:740–745). The episode tells how, on the occasion of the funeral of Patroclus, Achilles offered a large silver crater, 'a masterpiece of Sidonian craftsmanship', as a prize. The vessel, 'the loveliest thing in the world', was 'shipped by Phoenician traders across the misty seas' and displayed in various ports until it finally arrived in the port of Lemnos, and was offered as a gift to the king, Thoas. Later the same silver vase served as a ransom for one of Priam's daughters, captured by Achilles, and thus finally came into his hands.

It is thus a Phoenician crater with a 'history': displayed for sale at first, it is then presented as a gift to the king of Lemnos, subsequently used as a ransom and finally offered by Achilles as a prize in the funeral games of Patroclus, a prize which is won by Odysseus. It was not by chance that the crater ended up on the island of Ithaca.

The episode undoubtedly gives food for thought. Imagine an archaeologist discovering a silver vessel with these features which are typical of many examples from tombs in Cyprus and Italy (Fig. 31). With a discovery of this nature, only one firm fact is known: the

Fig. 31 Phoenician silver bowl from Idalion, Cyprus (eighth century BC)

Phoenician origin of the vessel. How can a 'commercial history' be reconstructed from that isolated piece of information? It is obvious that it is virtually impossible to reconstruct such a complex series of commercial transactions from a limited archaeological record.

The episode of Achilles' crater, moreover, is clear evidence of an itinerant Phoenician trade in which merchants transported their goods and objects of great value from one port to another. These luxury products, consisting generally of craters, cauldrons and tripods, passed from hand to hand as prizes, ransoms or ceremonial gifts to local kings or lords. At the end of all their wanderings, these products finished up as symbols of social status. The circulation of valuable objects among social elites must be fitted into the model of gift exchanges. These goods always have a high social and economic value and occasionally they figure in genuine operations of buying and selling, but always in the closed circle of the Greek aristocracy – Achilles, the king of Lemnos, Priam, Ulysses. The Phoenician crater, the cauldrons and the tripods that appear in this context in the Homeric epics, are called *keimélia* (*Iliad.* 17:292).

On the subject of the circulation of reciprocal gifts among social elites, another episode should be mentioned in which, once again, the

Phoenicians are involved. Reference is made to another chased silver crater with a rim of gold, held to be the work of Hephaestus, a crater that the king of Sidon had offered as a gift to Menelaus when he was a guest in his house (*Od.* 4:615–619). In this case, the practice of gifts seems to be associated with that of hospitality.

This episode appears to have surprised historians of ancient Greek trade, inasmuch as the practice of gifts and hospitality is considered an essentially Greek form of reciprocity. Maybe the Phoenicians adopted an eminently aristocratic system, that of exchanging gifts, through Greek influence. The Phoenicians confined themselves to practising what they saw in the Aegean. Furthermore, it is thought that, in the period described by Homer and Hesiod, this system of exchange was coming to an end. The practice of the gift, as a form of rank and power relationships, would constitute an institution linked with the *prexis* or aristocratic trade. When specialist, professional commerce reached Greece, it would have entailed the end of a system of reciprocity between princes, and profit, economic considerations and financial interest would have replaced the old aristocratic practices.

And yet the evidence shows that the exchange of gifts between social elites, with participants ranging from the king of Sidon to the king of Lemnos, far from being an institution that the Phoenicians happened to adopt in the Aegean, was a practice with a long tradition in the Near East, and particularly characteristic of the Final Bronze Age in Mesopotamia, Canaan and Egypt. The Phoenicians inherited this exchange mechanism from their predecessors, the Canaanites, and practised it at all times and in all places. It will be one of the formulae, moreover, that the Phoenicians will use in the west as a means of opening up new markets.

Gift exchange

In his well-known *Essai sur le don*, Marcel Mauss showed that in ancient and primitive societies, exchange occasionally took the form of an exchange of gifts. So we are dealing with a form of trade in which social condition and wealth are directly involved. This type of reciprocal exchange would be, like any other activity, a 'total social phenomenon', as well as having a clear economic significance, since it has implications that are at once social, religious, magical, economic, utilitarian, moral and legal. In the opinion of Malinowski, in many, if not all primitive peoples, economic acts belong in some chain of reciprocal present-giving.

Within the process of presents and counter-presents, the grades or relationships of equivalency vary from a balanced and equitable exchange between equals to an asymmetrical reciprocity that conceals relationships of power and gain. During the sequence of donation or presentation, these presents are exchanged for equivalent goods or else are received on the condition that counter-presentations will be offered later on, which in turn give the right to receive fresh presents. So the gift comes into circulation and creates social obligations. This is what happened with the crater of Achilles.

According to the principles of reciprocity, the exchange of gifts implies recognition of the right of one social sector to a prerogative, or else seeks to outdo a rival in opulence, privilege, rank and power. In this sense, the reciprocal exchange of gifts has a supra-economic character, to the extent that it is not the possession of riches that confers privilege and status, but their transmission and distribution. In the case of Achilles' Phoenician crater, the article has value as long as it is offered as a gift but not as an article that is acquired, and it passes from one court to another until, perhaps, it returns to its starting point.

In the sphere of reciprocal obligations, the exchange of gifts creates expectations of reciprocal conduct and, in the long run, rights, obligations and the recognition of continuing transactions. In special circumstances that call for a formula to initiate ties of solidarity or of trade, the mutual exchange of gifts may help strengthen the bonds of friendship and at the same time open up a continuing circuit of exchanges. It is one of the practices that usually follow the installation of traders in a foreign country and which the Phoenicians will use throughout the Mediterranean.

It is to the credit above all of Finley and Zaccagnini that they showed that the mechanisms of reciprocity, identified by Mauss and Malinowski among primitive peoples, were broadly similar to the exchange of gifts in Homeric Greece and the Asian Near East during the second and first millennia BC.

Reciprocity, gift and aristocratic trade are categories in which social rather than economic considerations would predominate, according to the model proposed by Polanyi's school, when discussing primitive forms of exchange.

When Telemachus visited Menelaus in his palace in Sparta, seeking news of his father, his host offered him as a parting gift three horses, a carved chariot and a magnificent cup, to which the youth replied:

'Please make the gift you offer me a keepsake I can carry' (*Od.* 4:590–605). The Greek word used for it is *keimélion,* that is to say, something that can be kept, a treasure, a non-utilitarian article which is not used but is kept safe, since its function is to be owned or to be given as a present.

Just as in Italy in the eighth and seventh centuries BC, in Homer's Greece this circulation of 'treasures' is the prerogative primarily of the aristocracy and seems to be closely linked to the norms of hospitality and friendship. 'Let us honour him like a god with gifts', says Homer. The giving of presents thus forms part of a network of honorific activities – it is as honourable to give as to receive – in which the use or display of treasure for its own intrinsic value becomes a symbol of prestige and status. And the more genealogy or 'story' these articles have, the greater their value since those articles with a history of which Homer's heroes boast cover both the donor and the recipient with honour. In other words, it is the social context that determines the value of these articles and value means power, first and foremost.

In the Near East, this system of exchange is recorded particularly from the time of El Amarna, and it is generally concerned with political and commercial relations between royal houses, given that it is the usual formula by which two kings or princes initiate or renew diplomatic and trading relations. We have examples of this in Phoenicia itself.

In the correspondence of El Amarna, reciprocity is chiefly an expression of the ideals of fraternity and parity between political elites, where it is not always easy to distinguish between gifts, tribute and trade. It has been suggested in this connection that tribute is merely a gift that has become obligatory.

In Amarnian trade of the fourteenth to thirteenth centuries BC, the commercial transactions between the monarchies of Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria, Cyprus and Canaan carry with them a series of factors that lie outside economics – the exchange of gifts – and tend to establish personal and diplomatic relations. We have a case, for example, of Cyprus sending ivory to Egypt in exchange for ivory. This cannot properly be called trade, since no profits or economic advantages are being sought in rational economic terms, but it is an 'irrational' and anti-economic act in which what counts is not the merchandise itself – the ivory – but the sending of ivory for ivory, that is to say a balanced reciprocity in the form of a social act through which it is hoped to establish diplomatic relations that, in the long

run, will indeed produce economic advantages. The economic 'irrationality' consequently produces economic rationality, according to Godelier's terminology.

The story of Wen-Amon constitutes a good example of reciprocity from the beginning of the first millennium. In it can be perceived a twofold level of exchange: the mercantile proper and the ideological or prestigious. On the mercantile plane, the business consists of a request for wood on the part of Wen-Amon to which Zakarbaal replies demanding an equivalent counterpart in the form of gifts. It is the same procedure as in Amarnian trade, in which the haggling and bargaining are no more than attempts to delay the business transaction in expectation of an anticipated payment (Appendix 1).

But in Wen-Amon's account we can already perceive a deterioration in the classic ceremonial of Final Bronze Age transactions. Wen-Amon flings an ideological discourse at the king of Byblos, in which he reminds him of the obligation to supply wood for the god Amon, as his predecessors had done. But Zakarbaal, protesting independence, invokes the ancient friendship between the kings of Egypt and Byblos in order to demand counterpart in gold and silver from Wen-Amon. The prestige of the king of Byblos is at stake, since the absence of reciprocity would amount to a breach of contract, of friendship and of hospitality.

Wen-Amon does not come to buy or to sell but to renew a trading relationship that had linked Byblos with Egypt during the second millennium, through uninterrupted exchanges of gifts. The economic background to this reciprocal exchange rests in reality in Byblos' obligation to provide cedar for building Amon's barque. Zakarbaal's negative response is therefore due to an absence of balanced reciprocity or of return gifts, which the Giblite king expects as a gesture of good will and recognition of his social status.

From all that has been said, we can infer that during the eleventh century BC Byblos is still making use of the international diplomatic norms through exchange of gifts, the prerogative of the monarchies of the Final Bronze Age. The practice of gift exchange acquires a distinctly ceremonial or prestige character between royal houses, and will be seen again in Tyre during the reign of Hiram I.

When Solomon succeeds his father David on the throne of Israel, Hiram sends him messengers and gifts or, which amounts to the same thing, makes a gesture of goodwill with the object of renewing relations with the new monarch (1 Kings 5:15). Moreover, the agreement

Fig. 32 Phoenician silver bowl from Praeneste, Italy (seventh century BC)

on friendship and commercial cooperation signed by the two monarchs contains a vocabulary of fraternity and friendship very close to that used in Amarnian trade. The starting point is a gift as a greeting, to which the new king replies with other gifts or counterparts which, in turn, evoke a response. This begins a sequence of exchanges of gifts which still does not constitute trade because no immediate counterparts are demanded – so it is 'irrational' – but which in the long run will lead to trade in the true sense, that of Ophir and the Red Sea.

Gift exchange is a deeply rooted exchange system in the Phoenician world which is not documented solely in the days of Zakarbaal of Byblos, in the reign of Hiram or in the epics of Homer, but which was practised in a pre-commercial, ceremonial and diplomatic manner by the Phoenicians in the initial stages of their expansion into the Mediterranean. We can document it in the island of Cyprus, in Sardinia, in central Italy and also in Tartessos, that is, in those territories where the indigenous society maintained a hierarchical social structure endowed with chiefs, princes and petty local rulers.

Many luxury articles of the eighth and seventh centuries BC discovered in the Mediterranean have an acknowledged attribution to Phoenician workshops probably rooted in Tyre itself. We are thinking particularly of a group of metal cups made of silver and bronze, some of them with gold leaf at the rim, like the crater of Hephaestus described by Homer, which have been found in the Assyrian royal palaces or in tombs belonging to native princes in Cyprus, Etruria and

Latium (Fig. 32). Before finally becoming part of princely burials, all these cups would probably have had their 'history' like Achilles' Phoenician crater.

The Phoenician silver cups, like other Phoenician luxury articles found in the west, are therefore prestige goods, in that their circulation is due to a sequence of successive exchanges, of a ceremonial and diplomatic type, between social elites and within very restricted circles. So we must speak of a 'prestige economy' insofar as the wealth circulated only amongst kings and leaders.

And the prestige factor possesses its own exclusive symbolism: wealth and the ostentatious hoarding of it. It is thus one of the most important factors in the creation of a surplus, since it stimulated the movement of persons and goods and mobilized large quantities of luxury goods. In this process of reciprocity and trade, in which, it must be said, economics come before social considerations, we may say that the Phoenicians were past masters.

In Cyprus, as well as in Italy and the Iberian Peninsula, the Phoenicians knew how to use and exploit the absence of organized trade between the indigenous populations, introducing prestige goods into those territories, aimed basically at their princes. In so doing, the Phoenicians aspired not only to create a demand in areas where there was none, but also to initiate friendly relations with those sectors of society that controlled regions with plentiful resources. This action implied recognizing the social rank of the local leaders. So it is not by chance that we find the greatest concentrations of prestige goods in native burials situated in the territories that were richest in metal ores: southern Etruria, the lower Guadalquivir and Huelva.

Once again we must stress the difficulties facing the archaeologist when it comes to distinguishing between an exchange of gifts and commercial exchange on the basis solely of the archaeological record.

In Etruria and Latium, some of these prestige objects have the name of the owner inscribed on them or contain inscriptions alluding explicitly to donations, give the name of the donor or contain donation formulae. The presence and distribution of such objects in princely tombs at Cerveteri, Vetulonia or Praeneste have made it possible to reconstruct in part the circuits in which sumptuous gifts were exchanged between Etruscan or Latin chiefs, on the basis of silver cups and Phoenician ivories, pitchers and oriental gold gems. This system lasted in Etruria until the middle of the sixth century BC, when a gradual transition to a monetary economy took place in the region.

Something similar can be seen amongst the 'barbarian' societies of Hallstattian Europe, where it started with the intervention of a Greek colonial element rather than a Phoenician one. The discovery of large bronze craters, tripods and chariots in princely tombs of the Celtic chiefs on the upper Danube or in Burgundy – the tumuli of, for example, Hohenasperg, Hochdorf, Grâchwyl and Vix – argues in favour of a system of gifts of a ceremonial and prestige type very similar to that used by the Phoenicians; they have the character of a 'donum' or *keimélion* and tend to open up markets to Greek trade in the interior of Europe.

It is thought that some elements typical of primitive currency can be seen in the system of reciprocal gifts, in the sense that certain metal objects in the form of cups, tripods or cauldrons could have a pre-monetary value as a means of exchange, for hoarding or as an expression of value.

Pre-monetary circulation

A question that is still the subject of debate today is that of whether valuable and prestige objects constituted 'money' or not, that is, pre-coinage symbols before the appearance of minted coins. Moreover, this debate must be seen in conjunction with the very small part played by Phoenicia in the origin of coinage. This is still surprising, even today, dealing as we are with the archetypal trading people, whose sway in this field, at the very moment when the first minted coinages appeared, was considerable. Contrary to the assertions of Polanyi and Malinowski, namely that there could have been no money in primitive and ancient societies because there was no price fluctuation, we now know that a system of price adjustment existed in Mesopotamia, Anatolia and the Levant and that 'money' was used before the minting of coins. In reality, any negotiation concerning valuations and equivalencies implies prices. It is said, too, that anything given in order to obtain something else is money. Furthermore, let us remember that price is the expression in money of the value of a commodity.

In Sumer and Babylonia there was price regulation and wages were stipulated in silver or cereals, which acted as equivalents. We have already seen, in the previous chapter, that, from the second millennium BC, silver was not used as a metal in commercial transactions but as 'money' or a unit of exchange.

Some authors talk of 'primitive money' – shells, metal bars, ingots –

or expression and units of value used in primitive and ancient societies. So, for example, in Africa, or in the epics of Homer himself, livestock functioned as a measurement of value. Laertes, the father of Ulysses, bought Eurycleia for the price of twenty oxen (*Od.* 1:430–431) and in that sense, livestock was 'money'.

In the Near East, researchers have managed to identify 'precoinages' in Ur, Susa, Mari and Kanesh, on the basis of calculating the measurements and analysing the weight of metal rings. These rings fulfil the function traditionally ascribed to coinage: measurement of value, a medium of exchange and ease of transport. Similarly the possibility of an Aegean ponderal unit has been suggested in connection with certain copper ingots found in the wrecks at Cape Gelidonya and Ulu Burun.

However it is not enough to make calculations of the weight of metal artefacts in order to infer monetary circulation. It is necessary to define the characteristics of this metal standard within the economic context in which it circulates. So, for example, an article may be a form of coinage or a medium of exchange without having a pattern of defined weight, that is, without a ponderal value. Hence the importance of the circulation of gold and silver cups and craters that appears in the east in relationships of tribute and interregional trade and, lastly, in the exchange circuits of prestige goods.

In the texts from Mari, the majority of the silver cups mentioned in commercial transactions or reciprocal exchanges have a specific weight, which suggests the existence of a precise unit of accountability, that is, a homogeneous weight. Consequently they could serve as metal standards. Ugarit, too, in the fourteenth to thirteenth centuries BC, developed specific weight systems, based on a shekel weighing 9 to 9.9 g. As in Mari, the silver cups mentioned in the Ugaritic texts are homogeneous in weight. Their unit of ponderal value would reside, however, not in their weight of approximately 1 mina (50 shekels), but in their character as a unit in commercial and ceremonial exchange.

Mauss had already linked the exchange of gifts and reciprocity with the origin of the notion of 'money' as a measure of value. Faced with the view that articles of value were simply external signs of wealth, Mauss defended the idea that precious gifts came to serve as use values and as media of exchange, given that possessing them brought power of acquisition. Other modern experts support this hypothesis, holding, like Parise, that precious metals and valuable articles functioned like 'money'. In other words, the reciprocity, prestation and

counterprestation of presents would be an organized form of trade in which the external signs of wealth could easily be converted into pre-coinage symbols. These precious and prestige goods are the *agalmata* and *keimélia* of Homer's day, that is, the craters, cauldrons and tripods. In the well-known Achilles episode, a bronze tripod was worth twelve oxen and a woman was worth four oxen. On the other hand, the Phoenician silver crater was worth one hundred oxen. Strictly speaking, we should be talking of a metal circulation with units of value.

The circulation of these *agalmata*, or values in circulation, was very extensive, given that in the days of Homer it stretched from the palace of Sidon to the kings of Cyprus, the Aegean and Etruria. With time, as they passed from hand to hand, their value increased until they gradually became pre-coinage symbols, that is to say, genuine ponderal and monetary units, before minted coins appeared.

In reality, in the East it is as difficult to define the transition from gift exchange to commercial exchange as it is to define the transition from this metal circulation to the circulation of coinage. The most ancient monetary circulation had to be restricted to assuming the same functions of prestige and hoarding as the *agalmata* or prestige goods. But with one difference: the most ancient coinage, in its function as a measurement and repository of value, cannot stray too far in its initial circulation from the centre that issues it. That is to say, the earliest known circulation of coins is much more restricted than that of the *agalmata*. If we accept that the origin of coinage must be a continuation of previous experiments, its appearance in each case implied a backward step in the ambit of metal circulation.

Coinage is defined as the circulation of money in the form of an equivalent piece of metal. The minting and issuing of the coinage are in the hands of the state and it constitutes a fungible possession that serves as a common measure of value and as an instrument of exchange.

It has been said that the Assyrians already knew a kind of minted coinage at the end of the eighth century BC: the so-called 'heads of Ishtar', equivalent to half a shekel, which were a kind of small copper coin of unknown characteristics. The temple of Ishtar would have been responsible for issuing it and the kingdom of Lydia could have taken up the idea, thanks to its close connections with the Assyrian kings.

In the neo-Babylonian period a few legal texts already allude to

precise definitions in the royal exchange, and silver bars weighing one shekel are known; their alloy and weight are defined and guaranteed by an official seal. So Babylon was coming close to the threshold of actual monetary use but she did not take the definitive step, perhaps because she did not consider it necessary.

Nevertheless, the invention of the first minted metal coinage is attributed to King Gyges of Lydia, at the beginning of the seventh century BC (Herod. 1:94). The most ancient coins were of electrum, an alloy of gold and silver, deriving value as a noble article in circulation from the *agalma*. The difference was in the imprint or die, which guaranteed the face value and weight of the little disk of precious metal that had been issued. It was the state or the authority that had the power to lay down a system of equivalencies.

The study of the first known systems of coinage indicates unequivocally that they were preceded by various pre-monetary experiments. In spite of that, the invention of coinage was not the end of the process initiated thousands of years before in Mesopotamia. The fact that the area of Lydia and the Greek cities of Asia Minor – Ephesus, Aegina – were among the earliest to mint coins shows that the first coinage did not arise precisely in the centres of international trade but in *poleis* which required rapid transactions at a local level. In other words, it is almost certain that the coinage did not spring from the needs of an international commercial strategy but from internal needs – payment of wages, expenses of war – and local socio-ideological exigencies.

It has been observed, moreover, that in the first Greek states to monopolize the minting of coins, the economic repercussions were very few. No state at that period could guarantee the value of its coinage outside its own frontiers or had very clear equivalencies with silver, the monetary standard *par excellence*. Coinage originates, therefore, from political needs and for reasons of local prestige, that is to say from non-economic considerations and not as a function of external trade.

From this standpoint we can look afresh at the Phoenicians' much debated 'backwardness' in minting coins. The fact that the great trading peoples like Tyre and Carthage joined so belatedly in the minting of coins raises questions about the relationship between organized trade and a minted coinage. We already know the position of Polanyi and Dalton on this matter: the Phoenicians were reluctant to adopt coinage because they did not have a market economy.

The most plausible hypothesis, however, is the one that suggests

that the Phoenicians shunned coinage precisely in order to safeguard their international trade which was much more far reaching and heterogeneous than the purely territorial and local trade in which the electrum coins were circulating with conventional values based on local silver, so that their value and equivalencies were perforce restricted to the ambit of the *poleis* or states in which they were circulating. In their place, until well into the sixth century BC, market necessities ensured that in the orbit of Phoenician trade a circulation of sumptuary goods predominated, following the norms of reciprocity, the equivalencies of which were stipulated by the aristocratic elites of the Mediterranean. Thus the Phoenicians will maintain forms of exchange more typical of the Final Bronze Age than of a monetary economy. The latter will gradually replace the old aristocratic formulae of yesteryear in the Mediterranean. It is no accident that as the new systems of exchange and trade were gaining ground successively in Greece, Italy and the Iberian Peninsula from the sixth century BC onwards, the forms of organization of ancient Phoenician trade were gradually disappearing from the scene.

CONCLUSIONS

On the question of the organization of Phoenician or eastern trade, alternative hypotheses have arisen which contradict the empirical propositions of Polanyi and are more in accordance with the archaeological record. So, for example, in place of the traditional and substantivist interpretation of 'gift trade', considered under the preconceived heading of reciprocity and characteristic of an 'irrational' or 'ceremonial' economy, in which social rank and status would prevail, a more appropriate explanation is now put forward which considers reciprocity as an exchange in which profits are sought and mutual trust between princes and merchants plays a part. In any case, this exchange marks genuine trade between royal houses, in which the gift would be no more than a form of payment in advance.

The opposition between state and private trade in the ancient east has proved equally unworkable. The two spheres merge and we need only point out that private commercial activity always increased in periods of weakening state power.

For example, in Cappadocia, the Assyrian king was a participant in the trade in Anatolian metals in direct competition with the great private commercial 'houses' or firms and both of them acted in accor-

dance with the mechanisms of a competitive market. From the middle of the third millennium until the Roman period, there is ample evidence of private trade in the Near East in which the king or the palace behaves like any other consortium. Monarchs do indeed take part in international trade, not in order to fix prices by treaty but to make their own profits, as Hiram and Solomon did.

A characteristic feature of this organization of trade was the pronounced family orientation of the great firms or mercantile consortia, which behaved like family brotherhoods. Thus private merchants used to operate within great families whose members inherited the business from each other. Today we should call this 'nepotism', but it was merely a formula to ensure loyalty between the members of a merchant company.

Furthermore, the epigraphic evidence from both Kanesh and Ugarit demonstrates that in the ancient east and in Phoenicia there were price fluctuations, market operations, changes in supply and demand, profits and private speculation. The accumulation of huge stores of grain and metal in Babylonia and Assyria in the second to first millennia BC clearly indicates the existence of a market.

Lastly, we see the temple functioning as a financial body, lending gold and silver for interest and giving credit for trade. Even in Ugarit, we see merchants paying vast sums to obtain trading concessions and competing directly with the palace. The circulation of money in the form of rings, bars and ingots merely bears witness to a wholly mercantile activity.

Many of the ideas expounded by Polanyi and Finley some time ago seem ingenuous now: for example, the assertion that long-distance trade carried no risks but was rewarded by payments of commission by the state; or the idea that in the ancient economy generally, exchange was governed more by considerations of status and social solidarity that by economic motives. There is no business without risks, and commercial exchange with no thought of profit would be very strange. The statement that 'the market implies a desire for gain that is far removed from Homeric exchange, which was not seeking profits' gives an excessively idyllic picture of the mechanisms of exchange in the ancient world, to say the least.

5

The great political institutions: the palace and the temple

The so-called 'great institutions' arose originally with the production of surpluses and it is the production and distribution of surpluses that underlie commercial exchange. Therefore the relationship between the great political institutions and the rest of society depended to a large extent on trade, and external trade in particular.

Religion and government can be as important for the structure and functioning of the economy as are the monetary institutions. The differences between the two are minimal in the ancient Near East and their functions are complementary to the point of being indistinguishable. In Tyre, the two great political institutions, the palace and the temple, were respectively the house of the king and the house of the god, and sheltered the same symbolic entity: the king of the city or Melqart.

THE PHOENICIAN MONARCHY

The monarchic institution is very ancient in the Phoenician cities. In Tyre, it is present from the first half of the nineteenth century BC until the conquest by Alexander. In the time of El Amarna, Tyre was known as the capital of a kingdom (*Uru*), which included a fringe of territory on the mainland (*Kur*), centred on Ushu.

Information about the structure and importance of the monarchic institution in the Phoenician cities is very scarce. Unlike other Asian monarchies, the Phoenician kings did not, as far as is known, indulge in recounting their exploits and political enterprises in commemorative inscriptions or reliefs in which the monarchs generally occupy the foreground. There is therefore no political propaganda, either internal or external, and the only commemorative epigraphs that we have appear in a few royal tombs in Byblos and Sidon.

All this has been interpreted as an unusual way of envisaging the

figure and function of the king in Phoenicia. The sovereign could not act with full political autonomy or invoke the figure of a national or dynastic god, given that his powers were limited by those of a powerful merchant oligarchy which would have placed substantial restrictions on them.

In reality we have at our disposal very little information about the power of the Phoenician kings. Everything, however, makes us think that, until the seventh century BC at least, their power was more or less absolute, as can be inferred from the behaviour of Hiram I, Ithobaal or Luli of Tyre.

Following the oriental model, the power of the great Phoenician monarchs like Hiram I found expression in the building of a new royal palace. The palace was a reflection of the aspirations of the king and of the power of the monarchy in every period.

In political and commercial affairs, the kings of Tyre and of Byblos were advised, as has already been indicated, by a Council of Elders, or representatives of the most renowned and powerful families in the city, whose power probably lay in their mercantile interests. As far as we can tell from the correspondence of the kings of Tyre and Byblos with the pharaohs of El Amarna, this institution goes back at least to the middle of the second millennium BC. King Ribaddi of Byblos mentions in his letters a social group endowed with great power and relative importance in his city, whom he calls 'the city' or 'them'. At somewhat more recent dates, allusion is made to this group as a governing body acting alongside the king and appearing as his equal; they are given the names of 'lords of the city' in Byblos, 'the great of the city' in Sumur and 'the men of Arvad'.

All this obviously reminds us of the words of Isaiah and Ezekiel when they mention the 'merchant princes' of Tyre (Isaiah 23:8) or the 'princes of the sea' (Ezekiel 26:16). No doubt this is a reference to the merchant oligarchy of the city which, in much more recent times, Arrian calls 'the important Tyrians' (2:24, 5) and Polibius 'the lords of Carthage' in the treaty signed by Hannibal and Philip II of Macedon. This last reference is certainly to the Council of the Ten, which was the basis of political power in Carthage, power which, in special circumstances, was assumed by two of its members, who were known as suffetes in Carthage and Cadiz.

In tablets from El Amarna, there is already explicit reference to a Coucil of Elders – in Akkadian *šibbutu* or *shibŭti* – in central Phoenicia, which we meet again in Wen-Amon's story (passage II, 71).

Indeed, in Wen-Amon King Zakarbaal seeks the advice of a Council of State to consider the extradition demanded by the Tjekker, which is hanging over the Egyptian envoy. This Council is called *mw'd*, a word that has been linked with the Hebrew *môᶜd* or assembly. This seems, then, to be an allusion to the senate of the city, made up of elders or the great of the community, the suffetes.

The Assyrian, Hebrew and Greek written sources so far analysed show that this Council of State went on functioning in Tyre, Byblos and Carthage throughout the seventh to third centuries BC. Among other matters assigned to it were questions concerning religion and taxes. Moreover, an inscription discovered in Sarepta suggests the possibility that a college or committee of ten may have existed in that city charged with governing the territory.

Still more explicit is the text of the treaty between Asarhadon and King Baal of Tyre, dated to the middle of the seventh century BC. In it, Asarhadon nominates an Assyrian governor in the court of the king of Tyre who is to assist in governing the city: 'in conjunction with you, in conjunction with the elders of your country', says the text, referring to the said governor. It calls these 'elders' *parshāmutu*.

Although we do not know exactly how this Council of Elders or of princes worked or what its political responsibilities were, everything seems to indicate that this kind of senate advised the Phoenician king on questions of state, but we do not know whether its function was purely consultative or whether it formed a direct part of the government. We are told, however, that it was made up of nobles and high officials, as in some Mesopotamian cities of the neo-Babylonian period, where we also find a Council of Elders assisting the king and resolving matters of a judicial, fiscal and religious nature. In some cases, the greatest hierarchies of the state worked in conjunction with this institution; according to the inscription on the sarcophagus of Ahiram of Byblos, these hierarchies consisted of the king, the governor and the commander of the armies.

Those who belonged to the Council of Elders or Council of State in each of the Phoenician cities were called *špt* in Phoenician, equivalent to the Akkadian *šapitum* and to Hebrew *šophêt*. In Israel, for example, these suffetes or 'judges' governed the territory in exceptional circumstances in the years 1200–1030 BC. There, they were leaders of clans and tribes, magistrates by divine right, who would be the forerunners of the monarchy. The best known of the judges of Israel was Saul.

Something similar happened subsequently in Tyre in the neo-Babylonian period, when Tyre was governed by suffetes – the *dikastai* – who represented the king of Babylonia or the king of Tyre himself, then a captive in Mesopotamia.

There is a possibility that some of the commercial settlements in the west, like Carthage, were administered in principle by suffetes, that is by civil magistrates or judges who, as in Tyre or Babylonia, governed in the name of the king of Tyre. For some authors, however, the presence of these *sôftim* in Carthage would go back no further than the fifth or even the third century BC. Be that as it may, the charge of suffete or governor, assigned to Tyrian colonial establishments, is limited to reproducing an oriental institution that goes back at least to the second millennium BC. Furthermore, this institution guaranteed the administrative ties between the colony and the metropolis.

From the Limassol inscriptions in Cyprus we may infer that in the Carthage in Cyprus there was a governor or prefect, 'a servant of Hiram', in the middle of the eighth century BC, who took to himself the title of *sokhen*, equivalent to the Akkadian *zu-ki-ni* . The charge corresponds to that of a prince or local governor and his function was to channel copper to Tyre in the time of Hiram II, to administer the Tyrian colony and to ensure political links with the metropolis. In spite of that, the suzerainty of the king of Tyre over the colony, probably Kition, is virtually absolute.

As for the Phoenician monarchy, it was a hereditary and strongly endogamous institution, judging by the history of the kings of Tyre. Inherent in the charge of king were his priestly functions which imparted one of their most characteristic features to the kings of Tyre.

The priestly connotations of the monarchy can be deduced from the titles paraded by the Phoenician kings at different periods. Thus the king of Sidon called himself 'priest of Astarte', and the king of Byblos 'priest of the Lady'.

The Phoenician monarchy used religion to create a favourable image for itself and to win the favour of the people. Hence the significant political role played by the priesthood. In Tyre and other cities, the priestly caste wielded much power, was in the service of the city and, in fact, sanctioned the official character of the monarchy. Temple and palace retained an almost absolute power in this sense, especially if we bear in mind that the function of chief priest was in the hands of the king himself or of members of the royal family.

The Annals of Tyre mention monarchs with priestly duties. Some

kings, like Ithobaal, 'priest of Astarte', made much of the charge before coming to the throne. This sacred and priestly nature of the Phoenician monarchy may have had very remote origins, since it is known in Canaan from the second millennium BC. We have an example of this in the legendary king of Salem, Melchizadek (Genesis 14:18), who was chief priest of the Canaanite god Elyon and, as such, blessed Abraham in the Canaanite city of Salem, a city which, from the first millennium BC, came to be called Jerusalem.

If one of the main functions of the Phoenician sovereign was that of chief priest, it is logical to suppose that religious activity would form one of the characteristic features of the Phoenician monarchy. The piety in which the kings of Tyre gloried is well known through their successive reconstructions of the temples in the city.

The Phoenician kings were not priests of just any divinity but of the chief divinity in the metropolitan pantheon, which conferred on the local god the title of the authentic lord of the city. In this theocratic concept of the state, in which the king governed in the name of the god, the functions became merged. This was true of Tyre, where the king and the god Melqart are at once the incarnation of the same institution: the state.

In the treaty of Baal and Asarhadon, the gods Melqart and Eshmún are invoked, the chief god of Tyre and of Sidon respectively. By annexing the Sidonian territory, Tyre had taken on new religious obligations.

There is significance too in the divine element that appears in royal names. So, for example, the sons of Hiram are called Balbazer and Abdastratus, which amounts to saying 'servant of Baal' or of Melqart, and 'servant of Astarte', the two principal divinities of the Tyrian pantheon.

Sometimes the king of Tyre, in addition to his priestly qualities, claimed to be divine, making himself equal to the god of the city himself. This, not unreasonably, provoked the wrath of the Hebrew prophets, as is demonstrated by the third prophecy of Ezekiel (Ez. 28), devoted entirely to the king of Tyre. This oracle is somewhat difficult to read and interpret (Appendix II). The prophet here launches a violent attack against the monarch: 'Being swollen with pride, you have said: I am a god. I am sitting on the throne of God, surrounded by the seas' (28:2). Ezekiel accuses him with these words: 'you are a man and not a god and you consider yourself the equal of God. [You think] you are wiser now than Daniel' (28:3).

The king of Tyre is seen here as a god in every sense, just as in the Phoenician sources which call the king Ba'al, meaning 'God'.

Ezekiel's accusations contain a somewhat ironic tone which is difficult to interpret. The allusion to Daniel is more intelligible today, thanks to the texts from Ugarit. Daniel is a mythological figure and, as such, forms part of a Canaanite myth in which this character is notable for his very great wisdom. Once again, the verses in Chapter 28 of Ezekiel are alluding to Canaanite, not Hebrew myths, and in form they resemble a very ancient poem. The power, beauty and splendour of the Tyrian monarchy match the framework of the ninth century BC better than the times of the prophet.

Ezekiel's lament for the king of Tyre continues with these words (28:12–15): 'You were once an exemplar of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty; you were in Eden, in the garden of God. A thousand gems formed your mantle . . . I had provided you with a guardian cherub; you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked amidst red-hot coals.'

Again we have a reference here to a very ancient Canaanite myth, that of the birth of the perfect 'cherub' out of the fire. The king, therefore is identified with the masculine form of a 'cherub', a cherubim or winged sphinx who walks on the holy mountain (Fig. 33).

Thanks to Phoenician figurative art we know that their pantheon was wont to be represented on mountains. The allusion to the cherubim walking on fire suggests immortality. In oriental myths, fire, or the rite of cremation, symbolizes purity and immortality. In this connection, let us remember Moses' burning bush, which was not consumed, or the myth collected by Plutarch about Isis burning the son of the king of Byblos every night to make him immortal.

It is obvious that Ezekiel is ridiculing the king of Tyre for making himself a god and identifying himself with the emblem of the god of the city, its winged creature, the masculine sphinx. Like the cherub and like Melqart, the king considers himself to be immortal and revitalized by fire. Like the gods, he walks over the sacred mountain, the Eden. This elegy against the king of Tyre closes Ezekiel's trilogy against Tyre. For the prophet, the Tyrian monarchy is the embodiment of pride, presumption, blasphemy, arrogance and a repudiation of the divinity in order to supplant it. The exaltation of the king will be followed by his fall.

In Tyre, the priesthood of the sovereign and the sacred nature of the monarchy seem to have been more pronounced than in other

Fig. 33 Winged sphinx or cherubim in a Phoenician ivory from the Nimrud palace

Phoenician cities, perhaps because of the very singularity of the god of the city, Melqart. The power of Melqart and of his temple were enormous, particularly in connection with the commercial policy in which the kings of Tyre were engaged.

But the deep resentment of some of the Hebrew prophets and in paricular their anti-monarchist posture are not due to the institution itself. What they cannot tolerate in the monarchs of Tyre is that they have set themselves up as priests and cherubs, that is to say as the sole intermediaries between man and the deity. And as we know, it is precisely this function of intermediaries before Yahweh that the prophets of Israel claim for themselves.

THE PHOENICIAN TEMPLE AND MELQART OF TYRE

The Phoenicians made their religion into one of the best instruments of their commercial and colonial policy. Like all ancient peoples, the Phoenicians felt closely bound to their gods. The god was the lord of

the city and, as such, exercised his authority over the community organized around his temple.

The view of the Phoenician religion that has come down to us is very incomplete and negative since we are indebted for the available information chiefly to their neighbours, the Israelites, and their political enemies in the west, the Romans. Even today, some authors stress the baseness of the Phoenician religion, its amoral rites, its religious brutality, the human sacrifice and sacred prostitution, all of them features that mark many of the religions of antiquity.

Phoenician religion, however, was one of the main instruments of the state and the monarchy. Moreover, the Phoenician religious cults appear to be very much conditioned by the economic and social interests of each city and by the political exigencies of the moment. In the case of Tyre, the cult of Melqart is a direct reflection of the policy and aspirations of her monarchs.

With respect to the ancient Canaanite religion, the Phoenician religion of the Iron Age presupposes an ideological break, which implies profound religious, ideological and socio-political changes at the end of the second millennium. The Phoenician pantheon seems to reflect cities shut in on themselves at the beginning of the first millennium, which must have favoured a gradual move towards strictly local religious variants. So it is not correct to speak of the Phoenician pantheon or the Phoenician religion, because each city, shut in around its king and its god, had its own local pantheon.

The most significant changes that took place in the Phoenician religion after the crisis of 1200 BC appear not to have their origin in the preceding Canaanite context. Indeed, in a very short time the great deities of the Ugaritic–Canaanite pantheon, like El, Dagan or Anat, disappear, and deities that had been marginal till then, like Astart–Astarte, come to the fore. Nevertheless the most important novelty is human sacrifice, unknown apparently in the second millennium, and the birth of 'national' gods with no known precedents, like Melqart, Eshmún and Reshef.

Another important novelty in the Iron Age cults is animal sacrifice, so well described in Leviticus, as well as human sacrifice. This latter, also known by the biblical name of 'molk sacrifice', would have a special resonance in the Phoenician enclaves in the west, where it appears linked with fertility rites and the monarchy. In Phoenicia, human sacrifice was very sporadic and disappeared in the middle of the first millennium.

From the beginning of the first millennium, we are struck by the very limited number of gods in the public pantheons. There are no triads, and Canaanite polytheism disappears. In its place, pairs of deities arise and concentrate the power and the functions of the old Canaanite pantheon in themselves. Each Phoenician city has its own pantheon made up of a pair of gods. This phenomenon makes very clear, among other things, how strongly individualist the Phoenician cities of the Iron Age were.

In Byblos, the central position was occupied by Baalat Gebal, the 'Lady of Byblos', of very ancient local tradition, who not only protected the city and the royal dynasty, but reigned over the city jointly with her partner, the god Baal Shamem. In Sidon we find the same divine pairing, but in this city it is Astarte and Eshmún who dominate. In Berytos, the chief divinity was also female: Baalat. Apart from the goddess of Byblos, none of these gods has important predecessors in the second millennium.

In the city of Tyre, by contrast, the chief divinity was masculine: Melqart, the protector of the city, symbol of the monarchic institution and founder of colonies. Astarte, Baal Shamem and Baal Hammon play a supporting part.

About the seventh century BC the Phoenician pantheon is becoming increasingly complex and the sway and influence of some of the gods increases, gods who, like Tanit and Baal Hammon, will be enormously popular in the west. Particularly interesting for us is the figure of Melqart, so closely linked with Phoenician trade and expansion through the Mediterranean. Melqart has no known antecedents in the second millennium and his personality and religious cult are documented only from the time when Tyre gained sway over the other Phoenician cities. His figure takes shape, then, from the tenth century BC and has its roots in the reign of Hiram I. He was god both of fertility and of the sea and the Tyrians called him 'Lord of Tyre', that is, Ba'al de Ṣor. His name itself, Melqart, means 'king of the city' (melekqart), showing that the origin of his cult has eminently urban roots. However, this does not rule out other attributes peculiar to this god, as we shall see. Consequently, the god represents the power of the monarchy and also possesses certain human characteristics, since the foundation of cities and colonies is attributed to him. Furthermore, some myths refer to Melqart as a hunter.

According to the testimony of Herodotus, who visited Tyre in the middle of the fifth century BC, the worship and the temple of Melqart

had arisen at the same time as the city, so around 2300 BC (Herod. 2:43–44). So in Tyre itself, Melqart already appears to be associated with a foundation myth (Arrian 2:15, 7–16, 7). The Greek historian saw the temple in Tyre with his own eyes and describes it flanked by the two famous columns of gold and emerald, and inside it the tomb of the god.

Nonnos, a poet of the fourth to fifth centuries AD, transcribes an ancient legend (*Dionysiacs* 40, l. 422), according to which, in the beginning of time, god would have ordered Heracles to land on the enigmatic 'ambrosian stones' (*ambrósiai pétrai*), rocks drifting in the midst of the sea, on which was growing an olive tree topped by a menacing eagle. Complying with the orders, the ancestors of the Tyrians, personified in the figure of Heracles–Melqart, took possession of the rocks, cut down the olive tree and captured the eagle, whereupon the drifting island became fixed in the sea and on it Tyre was founded. This foundation myth would explain the existence in the temple at Tyre of the two sumptuous artificial stelae or pillars of gold and emerald, an olive tree and a sacred fire described by Herodotus (2:44) and Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* 37, 74).

Some authors have hinted at a direct link between the two pillars of the temple in Tyre and the Pillars of Hercules at the other end of the Phoenician world in the city of Gadir (Arrian 2:17, 1–4). In the temple of Gades too there existed, next to the bronze stelae or altars, a sacred fire and the so-called golden olive tree of Pygmalion, adorned with emerald fruit (Strabo 3:5; Silius Italicus 3:29; Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius of Tiana* 1:5).

The consecration or 'invention' of Melqart is attributed to Hiram I, according to the testimony of Menander of Ephesus (*Ant. Iud.* 8:5, 3:146; *C. Ap.* 1:118). That monarch built the new temple of Melqart, demolishing the old temple of Tyre, dedicated perhaps to Baal Hadad. Yet again, the building of a temple to Melqart symbolized the founding, refounding, rebuilding or reorganization of a Phoenician city (Isaiah 23:4).

The initiative for the first celebration of an annual festival dedicated to Melqart is also attributed to Hiram I; it commemorates the resurrection or awakening of the god. This annual feast-day, the *egersis*, was very similar to that of other eastern gods who died and rose again, like Adonis. The festival was celebrated in the month of the Peritia (February–March) and consisted of a genuine immolation of the god through ritual cremation. The intention was, logically, to revive him

and make him immortal by virtue of fire. The belief in resurrection by fire, already known in Ugaritic myths, explains the fact that Melqart is also called 'fire of heaven'.

The *egersis* or resurrection of Melqart took place, then, every spring, when the rains stopped, which gives the personality of the god a solar and especially an agrarian character. Probably the god was burned in effigy on a pyre and the myth assures us that he revived at the smell of fire. Then he was buried and subsequently came the resurrection and manifestation of the god. During the festival, hymns were sung and foreigners were expelled from the city.

The agricultural nature of Melqart, a god who dies and is reborn each year in accordance with the natural cycles, was eclipsed by his great maritime prowess. On the coins from Tyre, Melqart appears as a sea god, mounted on a hippocampus. As god of the sea, he was the patron of shipping and trade.

During the Phoenician expansion into the Mediterranean, all these myths found their way to the west. A version of the legend located the death of the god in Spain. Some classical authors, like Sallust and Pausanias, mention the tomb of the god in Iberia and the celebrations of his death and resurrection in Gades (Paus. 9:4, 6).

In the annual awakening of the god the king of Tyre seems to have played a very active role. The monarch not only took part in the ceremonies, but intervened directly in the festival by a ritual marriage with a priestess or the queen herself, as was customary in oriental religions. This rite, the *hieros gamos*, had the royal couple playing the role of stand-in for the divine couple, Melqart and Astarte. No doubt this festival, combined with the deification of the king of Tyre, will provoke the wrath of the Hebrew prophets.

At first, Melqart of Tyre could have been a deification of the king of the city himself, the *mlk-qrt*. If that were so, Melqart, the Tyrian national god, would be a theological exaltation of the king and, as such, the ancestor of the city, the hypostasis of the king and, in short, the king himself. This type of idealization and deification of the monarchy, which so disturbed Ezekiel, has no precedents in the Canaanite world, nor is it recorded in other Phoenician cities. As far as Ugarit is concerned, for example, it implies a qualitative leap regarding the figure of the king, whose ancestor, moreover, is that same Melqart.

A legend that shows in its origins the influence of the religious nationalism of the Tyrians associates the origin and invention of the 'purple' with the 'Lord of the City', Melqart. It tells that the

only known mistress of the god, the nymph Tyros, had led, through her demands, to the discovery of the purple (Pollux 1: 45). This means that Melqart is not only the god and ancestor of Tyre, but is responsible for its wealth and prosperity. So he is its chief benefactor and protector.

The history and fate of Melqart are the history and fate of Tyre and her daughters, the western colonies. In Hannibal's famous oath of 215 BC, the Tyrian pantheon is still mentioned and consists of Heracles (Melqart) and Astarte as well as Iolaos or Eshmún, all of them symbols of the monarchy.

In the history of Cyprus, Melqart–Eshmún, that is the royal family of Tyre, appear as founders of the kingdom of Kition. In the fifth century BC, Kition is still minting coins with the effigy of Melqart.

When Alexander the Great besieged Tyre, the Macedonian, who claimed to be descended from Heracles, expressed a wish to offer a sacrifice in the temple of Melqart for ends that were clearly political (Arrian 2:15,7–16,7). The Tyrians were categorically opposed to that, considering the place to be sacred. Melqart was the symbol of their autonomy and independence, but above all he was the symbol of their national identity.

If the king of Tyre used religion for political ends and for propaganda, it is logical to suppose that the priests involved in the worship of Melqart must have played a decisive political role in the history of Tyre.

We know that a priestly college was responsible for the worship and administration of the temple. These clergy were recruited, moreover, from among the most influential families in the city; the most influential offices such as that of high priest were held by members of the royal family. Let us remind ourselves that the sister of Pygmalion, Elissa or Dido, foundress of Carthage, was married to the high priest of the temple of Melqart, and that the kings Tabnit and Eshmunazar of Sidon were high priests of Astarte. On ascending the throne of Tyre after a *coup d'état* in 887 BC, Ithobaal made great play of the office of priest of Astarte.

On the occasion of the founding of a colony or commercial enclave, Tyrian custom demanded that a temple be built in honour of Melqart. This created a religious bond between the colony and the metropolis, and the presence of the god in distant lands ensured the tutelage of the temple of Tyre in the enterprise. In other words, the presence of Melqart guaranteed or drew attention to the intervention of the monarchy in every distant commercial activity.

The most ancient Tyrian foundations in the Mediterranean appear to be linked to a temple which, in most cases, was dedicated to Melqart. In fact, Tyrian expansion to the west coincides with the gradual introduction of the worship of Melqart in Cyprus, Thasos, Malta, Carthage, Gadir and perhaps even in Rome.

In Gadir and Carthage the figure of Melqart finds its way even into the story of the foundation. This is probably a reflection of the firm intention to associate the origins of these western settlements with the city of Tyre and, by extension, with its temple and its king. Not only did the god appear in association with the oldest settlements in the west, but occasionally the building of a temple preceded the founding of the city. This seems to have been the case at Cadiz. Moreover, in certain foundations the figure of Melqart had considerable weight, as, again, in Gadir. Only in Gadir and Tyre were the god and his relics worshipped and his resurrection commemorated annually (Silius Italicus 3:22).

Two other very ancient temples were established in the west at the same time as the founding of the Tyrian colony: in Utica (Pliny *Nat. Hist.* 16:40) and in Lixus in Atlantic Morocco (*Nat. Hist.* 19:63). In Paphos and Cythera, the only trace of the passage of the Phoenicians in the early period consists of the temples of Aphrodite or Astarte (Herod. 1:105), and in Thasos the presence of Phoenician navigators exploiting its gold mines is attested by the founding of a temple to Heracles or Melqart (Herod. 2:44). Lastly, in Memphis the Phoenicians formed a settlement round a sanctuary dedicated to the 'foreign Aphrodite', that is, Astarte (Herod. 2:112).

The building of a sanctuary to Melqart in any relatively important Tyrian foundation reflects a constant preoccupation on the part of the first colonists arriving in the west: to legitimize the foundation. The presence of the god automatically converted the settlement into a prolongation of the country of origin, the kingdom of Tyre, at the same time as it ensured peaceful trading relations with the natives, since it offered sacred protection to the transactions. Phoenician trade in the west, then, began under the aegis of the god Melqart, that is to say of the king of Tyre.

In addition to becoming the tutelary deity of the great Tyrian maritime enterprises, the figure of Melqart was linked with exceedingly complex political and economic interests. In Carthage, for example, the cult of Melqart was introduced at the very origin of the city. Elissa,

the foundress, had brought objects sacred to the god with her to north-west Africa. Her husband Acherbas, or Zakarbaal, had been the chief priest in the temple at Tyre, so he had ranked immediately after the king on the social scale. So, in one way or another, the royal family and the temple of Tyre are behind the myth of the founding of Carthage (see Chapter 8).

The story goes that ever after, the Carthaginians sent an offering or tribute each year to the god Melqart of Tyre; this consisted of a tenth part of the public treasury. This custom persisted until the Hellenistic period (Diodorus 20:14, 2; Polybius 31:12; Arrian 2:24, 5). This annual embassy indicates that Carthage, the 'new Tyre' or Qart-hadasht, remained under the tutelage of Tyre for a long time. There seems to have been only one reason for this: the tutelage of the king of Tyre over the Carthaginian maritime enterprise and the financial participation of Tyre in western trade. The annual tribute conscientiously sent by Carthage was nothing other than the profits from the western enterprise, reverting to the temple of Melqart and consequently to the royal palace in Tyre. In this way it can be said that the functions of the sanctuaries to Melqart in the west consisted in serving as a bond uniting Tyre with the Mediterranean trading centres. In exchange for seeing that all was well with shipping and trade, Melqart received a tenth part of the profit made. So his function was not exclusively religious, but basically political: to ensure the dependent relationship of Cadiz or Carthage to Tyre. This link still existed in the Hellenistic period. Thus, at the time of the siege of Tyre by Alexander, it is said that the city kept hoping till the last moment for help from its brothers, the Carthaginians (Diodorus 17:40, 3; 20:14, 1–2).

Equally significant is the fact that in Carthage the cult of Melqart almost always arose in association with the monarchic ideal. Before Tanit and Baal Hammon became popular, Melqart wielded considerable power in Carthage and his cult declined only in the period of government by the suffetes. As a dynastic god, Melqart symbolized the monarchy, while Tanit and Baal symbolized the oligarchy, represented by the family of the Magonidas. His cult won renewed popularity only with the arrival of the Barcidas, known for their monarchic aspirations in Carthage. On the coins of the Barcidas in Spain, Hamilcar, Hannibal and Hasdrubal deified themselves, adopting the appearance and effigy of Melqart. Significant, too, is the presence of a great many

god-like names in Carthage, formed from the name of the god of Tyre (*A-mlkr*). For the rest, the episode of the other Carthaginian general, Hamilcar, is well known; like the foundress, Elissa, he committed suicide by throwing himself into the fire. Suicide by fire is an integral part of the ritual of the god, that is to say, of resurrection and immortality through sacrifice.

6

The routes of Phoenician expansion in the Mediterranean

The distribution and location of the principal Phoenician settlements in the Mediterranean make it clear that the ancient foundations met a twofold requirement: trade and shipping (Fig. 34).

From the very moment at which the first commercial enclaves were established on the western coasts, the Phoenicians had control in practice of the main trade routes, from Cyprus and Crete in the east to Gibraltar in the west. If we accept the dates for the founding of Cadiz, Lixus and Utica as around 1100 BC, as some authors claim, we are speaking of a maritime monopoly lasting some 500 years. The organization of such a vast commercial network was obviously a response to equally important objectives in the eyes of Tyre, in essence the precious metal that made the costs of an enterprise on such a scale worthwhile. Possibly Tyre and other cities on the Levantine coast had heard from sailors and ships' captains of the abundance of gold, silver and tin in the far west of the Mediterranean. A few centuries earlier, at the end of the second millennium, ships from Cyprus and the Aegean had forged a way through the waters of the central Mediterranean and along the coasts of Sicily, Italy and Sardinia, so the west was not totally unknown to the peoples of the eastern Mediterranean.

However, if the initial and most important objective of the Phoenician diaspora to the west was to obtain metals, as all the written references of the period unanimously agree, the siting of some of the settlements like Carthage, Utica, Ibiza or the trading posts on the Mediterranean coast of Andalusia, located in areas not particularly rich in metal resources, is not so easy to explain.

The Phoenician' superiority as seafarers was clear to the peoples of antiquity. The reputation of being expert pilots, enjoyed by the people of Tyre and Byblos, combined with the seafaring conditions at the time, lead us to think that shipping played an important part in the

Fig. 34 Phoenician expansion into the Mediterranean

organization and form of the Phoenician diaspora to the west and in the way in which it developed.

We know that, on their travels through the Mediterranean, the Phoenicians established themselves on islands and islets, peninsulas and coastal promontories with good natural anchorages, bays and inlets sheltered from the winds and currents, easy to defend against possible dangers from the sea or the mainland and situated at the mouths of rivers or natural access routes to the interior of the territory.

Although shipping systems and techniques were not the only factors that helped to shape the Phoenician commercial network in the west, they certainly determined to a large extent the general topography of the Phoenician colonies and their later evolution, and provide us with an approach to the analysis, in later chapters, of other questions of an economic and geo-political nature concerning the geographic distribution of the Phoenician diaspora.

THE PHOENICIAN SETTLEMENTS: THEIR DISTRIBUTION

The Phoenician centres in the western Mediterranean should be seen as links in a commercial chain; their location allows us to reconstruct the Phoenician shipping routes before Carthage irrupted on to the geo-political scene in the west in the sixth century BC. Insofar as we are engaged in reconstructing Phoenician sea routes in the Mediterranean, we shall omit all the secondary colonial or commercial foundations, that is, those that are offshoots of existing Phoenician centres in the west.

From the written tradition and the archaeological record, it is possible to distinguish three groups of Phoenician or Tyrian settlements in the western Mediterranean. The order in which these groups are presented is random in principle, since we are basing ourselves solely on the classical authors.

In order of antiquity, the first Phoenician establishments in the west were the colonies of Lixus, Cadiz and Utica. From this information it is obvious that, in their Mediterranean diaspora, the Phoenicians opted for the most westerly territories and those port enclaves situated on the direct route of access to the Straits of Gibraltar and the Atlantic.

According to the testimony of Velleius Paterculus (1:2, 3; 1:8, 4) the Phoenician fleet, which was already in control of the seas, founded Gadir some eighty years after the fall of Troy, and Utica a little later.

According to the chronology attributed to the Trojan war (1190 or 1184 BC), the date for the founding of Gadir or Gadeira lies round about 1110 or 1104 BC and that of Utica, in North Africa, around 1100 BC. The colony at Cadiz was founded on a small island, now attached to the mainland, facing the estuary of the Guadalete and the kingdom of Tartessos. Other classical authors place the founding of Cadiz 'shortly after' the fall of Troy, without being more precise: Strabo (1:3. 2), Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* 19:216) and Pomponius Mela (3:6, 46).

The same Pliny adds that in Lixus, in Atlantic Morocco, there was a sanctuary to Heracles (Melqart) that was older than the one in Gadir and he places the mythical Garden of the Hesperides in this area (Pliny *Nat. Hist.* 19:63). Ancient Lixus, situated on the mouth of the modern Loukkos and in a well-sheltered bay, is close to present-day El Araich or Larache. According to the classical texts, it was apparently the most ancient Phoenician colony in the west, although, like Cadiz, it has not so far yielded any archaeological material earlier than the seventh century BC.

A third foundation, Utica, on the coast of Tunis, seems to consolidate the access routes to the Atlantic. Concerning its origins, Pliny reports that in his day – that is the year 77 AD – the cedarwood beams placed there 1,178 years earlier at the foundation of the city were still preserved in the temple of Apollo. That would place the foundation date around the year 1101 BC. Silius Italicus says that Utica was a 'Sidonian' foundation (3:241–242) and the Pseudo-Aristotle dates its Phoenician origins to 287 years before the founding of Carthage *(De mirabilis auscultationibus,* 134) in the year 814, which again gives us the date of 1101 BC. Such a dating coincidence makes us suspect a single common source of information for all these classical authors. To conclude, let us say that, up till now, the archaeology of Utica does not allow us to speak of Phoenicians frequenting this stretch of the Tunisian coast earlier than the eighth and seventh centuries BC.

After this first batch of distant foundations, of debatable chronology, we find no new historical references until the ninth century BC, the period in which two new colonies are founded in North Africa: Auza and Carthage. Auza, founded by Ithobaal of Tyre (887–856 BC), on the coast of Libya, has still not been identified. By contrast, we have a plentiful supply of written information at our disposal for the founding of Carthage. All the classical historians, inspired appar-

ently by the writings of Timaeus, a historian of the fourth to third centuries BC whose work has been lost, agree in fixing the origins of Carthage in the years 814 or 813 BC. Thus, supported by Timaeus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus states that Carthage was founded thirty-eight years before the first Olympiad (*Ant. Rom.* 1:74, 1) in the year 776 BC, which places the origins of Carthage in 814 BC. This coincides with the testimony of Velleius Paterculus (1:12, 5), who attributes a duration of 667 years to the history of Carthage. As we know, Carthage fell under the power of Rome in the year 146 BC (667 + 146 = 813).

In Justinus' account (18: 4–6), Carthage was, like Auza, Utica and Gadir, a Tyrian foundation and the work of Elissa, the sister of the king of Tyre, Pygmalion or Pumayyaton. Elissa is said to have fled to the west because of the assassination of her husband Acherbas or Zakarbaal, at the hands of the king. In founding the city, Elissa and the Tyrian refugees were helped by the men of Utica and, with a clearly political intention, called the place 'Qart-hadasht' (= new city or capital).

If, by their early chronology and remote geographical location, the foundations of Lixus, Gadir and Utica form a separate block, the origin of Carthage seems to mark a second milestone in the process of Phoenician expansion into the Mediterranean, in the sense that access to the Atlantic route was definitively controlled by naval traffic. It can be said, borrowing the words of Strabo, that during the ninth and eighth centuries BC 'the Phoenicians were already established in Iberia and Libya' (Strabo 3:2, 14). By those dates 'they arrived far beyond the Columns of Hercules [Gibraltar] and founded cities in those parts and also in the middle of the coast of Libya, shortly after the fall of Troy' (Strabo 1:3, 2).

We do not know at what precise moment the Phoenicians settled on the east coast of Andalusia. We are merely told that between the coast of Almería and that of Malaga there were in former times 'a multitude of Phoencians' (Avienus, *Ora Maritima* vv. 440 and 449–460). There is concrete mention of three cities, Malaka, Sexi and Abdera (a distinctly oriental name) (Strabo 3:4, 2–3), identified respectively as the present-day cities of Malaga, Almuñécar and Adra (on the coast of Almería) and it is precisely on that stretch of coast that one of the largest concentrations of ancient Phoenician population in the whole of the western Mediterranean has been confirmed by archaeology; their chronology, together with Carthage, provides the oldest known

dates for Phoenicians frequenting the west, from at least the beginning of the eighth century BC.

Another group of Phoenician colonies, the exact date of whose foundation is unknown to us, is situated in the island of Sicily. We are indebted for the most significant piece of information to Thucydides, who writes:

> The Phoenicians also inhabited the whole of Sicily, after having occupied promontories on the sea and islands close to the coast in order to facilitate trading relations with the Sicilians. When the Greeks arrived in large numbers from beyond the sea, they left the greater part of the country and congregated in Motya, Solunto and Panormo, where they lived in safety alongside the Elimians, thanks to an alliance with the latter and to the fact that that part of the island was not very far from Carthage. (Thuc. 6:2, 6)

So we understand that the Phoenicians occupied a large part of the island until, at the end of the eighth century BC, the arrival of the Greek colonizers forced them to settle in Motya, Solunto and Palermo, that is in the far west of Sicily. In spite of that, the new situation was favourable from the strategic point of view since from Motya they dominated the Carthage Straits. Motya was the main Phoenician settlement of the island (Diodorus 16:48, 2 and 51, 1). It is a small isle, close to the coast, and its archaeological record does indeed place its origins at the end of the eighth century BC. This is not the case in Palermo, where the necropolis shows no evidence of Phoenician occupation before the seventh century BC, and Solunto has not so far been identified.

Diodorus tells us that the Phoenicians, already masters of the west, also took possession of Malta, a good refuge, provided with good harbours (Diod. 5:12, 3). Archaeological discoveries in the necropolis in the Rabat region and in sanctuaries in the interior of the island (Tas Silg) confirm the presence of Phoenician sailors from the end of the eighth century BC at least. It is thought that the Phoenician colony might have been centred on Melite, the modern Medina-Rabat.

The Phoenicians also occupied Gozo and Pantelleria and, perhaps, Lampedusa as well (Diod. 5:12; Pseudo-Scylax 111). The original name of the island of Gozo, *Gaulos*, of Phoenician origin meaning a type of merchant ship, and the old name of Pantelleria, *Iranim*, likewise suggest links with ancient Phoenicia.

Leptis Magna, Hippo and Hadrumetum on the North African coast form another group of colonies believed to have been founded by Tyre

or Sidon (Sallust, *Bell. Iug.* 77:1, Silius Italicus, *Punica* 3:256; Pliny *Nat. Hist.* 5:76). So far, however, these settlements have not yielded archaeological material from the early period, except, apparently, Leptis Magna.

Lastly, mention must be made of the island of Sardinia, where archaeology records the presence of Phoenician colonists from the seventh century BC at Nora, Sulcis, Tharros, Bithia and Caralis (Cagliari), In the case of Sulcis and Tharros, archaeological documentation goes right back to the eighth century BC. From the distribution of these cities, we can deduce that Tyre was interested in controlling the whole of the southwest of the island.

The written sources relating to the Sardinian foundations say very little about their origins. Some references, however, are especially interesting in that they appear to associate the Phoenician occupation of Sardinia with elements arriving from the Iberian Peninsula. Pausanias (9:17) states that the first to anchor their ships in the island of Ichnusa were Africans (Carthaginians) under the command of their chief, Sardo, who gave his name to Sardinia. Later, the Iberians passed through the island with their admiral Norax, and founded Nora, the first city on the island (Solinus 4:1). Thus Phoenicians, Carthaginians and perhaps Phoenicians from Gadir all had a hand in colonizing Sardinia.

Through this overall picture we can confirm that almost all the southern coasts and islands of the western Mediterranean were under Phoenician dominion, a dominion that seems to have been consolidated during the eighth and seventh centuries. The density of the Phoenician enclaves in the west, moreover, shows that the diaspora into the Mediterranean was no simple expedition like the one in the Red Sea, nor a local colonization, as in the gulf of Alexandretta, but that it involved the displacement of major contingents of the Phoenician population, especially in the eighth century BC.

In this whole process of expansion westward, Kition acted as a genuine bridgehead. Maybe on the return trip some Phoenician enclave in Egypt fulfilled an identical function. Herodotus (2:112) mentions a last Phoenician colony in Memphis, where the Tyrians occupied part of the town and built a temple to Astarte.

Various naval-technical circumstances undoubtedly combined in shaping this network of Phoenician enclaves in the Mediterranean. We shall now discuss to what extent this was so.

TECHNIQUES AND SYSTEMS OF NAVIGATION

We are assured that the Phoenicians invented the art of navigation, and learnt the rudiments of astronomy, which they applied to navigation, from the Chaldeans (Pliny *Nat. Hist.* 7:57). Writing about the origins of Tyre, Philo of Byblos states that one of the founders of the city, Ousôos, used a charred tree trunk to make the first canoe known in history. Whatever the facts, since the Phoenician period, navigational techniques hardly evolved at all until the Middle Ages and it is quite possible that the information included by Ptolemy in his famous Mapa Mundi was based on Phoenician navigational charts.

Underwater archaeology has not so far succeeded in recovering any Phoenician ship from the period of expansion into the Mediterranean. Even so, it is possible to reconstruct the Phoenician systems of navigation from the historical references of the period and from pictures of Phoenician ships that appear in Assyrian reliefs. Thus we know that the Phoenician boats used sails which were square and that the handling of the vessels was heavy, cumbersome and dangerous. We know, too, that they resorted to oars when there was no wind and that they practised coastal navigation and sailed the high seas, that is to say, sailed at night in the open sea.

The Phoenicians undertook naval expeditions to the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea and succeeded in circumnavigating Africa. They were sufficiently familiar with the Mediterranean to know which were the most advantageous places to establish their staging posts and colonies. They adapted their system of navigation to fit any circumstances. Thus they faced no serious difficulties when it came to embarking on regular sailings from one end of the Mediterranean to the other. So we can dispense with the traditional idea that ships in such a remote period were of such shallow draught that they were incapable of facing the dangers of the open sea.

Coastal navigation

It is generally thought that captains in antiquity were accustomed to sticking close to the coast so as to avoid the dangers of the open sea. At night, they beached their ship or dropped anchor in some well-sheltered and shallow inlet. According to this theory, the Phoenicians, without adequate navigational instruments, would have sailed by day at a prudent distance from the coast, like all their contemporaries.

For a very long time people insisted that the Phoenicians sailed exclusively by day in short stretches of 20 or 30 miles a day. This theoretical model, worked out by Cintas years ago (1949), rules out any possibility of sailing by night. The daily stages would, according to this author, coincide with the average distance of some 19 to 25 miles observed between the Phoenician or Punic settlements along the African coast. These coastal staging posts, moreover, all followed the same settlement pattern: a small island close to the coast or a headland on the mouth of a river, with harbours protected against the wind. Cintas called it the 'Punic landscape'.

This theory is relevant if we accept that there was only one system of navigation. But the system of coastal sailing off the shores of islands, bays and headlands is slow and dangerous because it forces sailors to hug the coast by day and anchor at night, with all the disadvantages that that involves. So it is suitable for small fishing boats and local traffic but not for long-distance trade.

What is more, not all the Phoenician enclaves in the west fit the model of coastal staging posts. If all Phoenician navigation had been of this type, it would not explain, among other things, the presence of enclaves in Sardinia or the Balearics. Ibiza, for example, is more than 25 miles from the nearest staging post. As the crow flies, it is more than 65 miles from Ibiza to the southeast of Iberia. From Abdera to Oran the distance is over 130 miles and from Oran to the mouth of the Guadalhorce, in Malaga, is more than 200 miles. The shortest stretch between the Algerian coast and Cape Gata, for example, is a distance of 100 miles in a straight line, which would be equivalent to some three days' sailing without sight of a single Phoenician port. Moreover, there is not one single Phoenician enclave on the Moroccan coast from Oran to Gibraltar (235 miles as the crow flies) before the fifth century BC.

The theory of a chain of staging posts or naval bases for taking on stores or seeking refuge at night does not fit in either with the distances between the Phoenician settlements on the Mediterranean coast of Andalusia. In this region, the average distance between one colony and the next as the crow flies is only 6 km (3.75 miles). Consequently we must ask ourselves whether, alongside the obvious existence of Phoenician coastal sailing, we should not be looking for other factors or practices to explain the location of a good many of the ancient Phoenician enclaves whose arrangement does not fit in with the mathematical distances of 20 to 25 miles for coastal navigation.

Sailing the high seas

The siting of the Phoenician foundations in Sicily, Sardinia and Ibiza makes it quite clear that the Tyrians sailed the open sea and that not only could they face the hardships of the high seas but they must necessarily have travelled by night.

At certain periods of the year, it was very hazardous to embark on regular voyages of thousands of miles on the high sea, due to the strength of the winds and currents in the Mediterranean. This is why the open sea was very often 'no-man's land'.

During the eighth and seventh centuries BC, however, both navigation on the open sea and systems of lighting at night are documented. Thus, when Hesiod speaks of *ergon* trade, he seems to be describing commercial operations lasting an estimated fifty days and not small-scale or coastal navigation. In the Odyssey, trips lasting more than six days and nights are mentioned and a four-day voyage from Crete to Egypt with no intermediate ports of call is described (*Od.* 14:257–258). Later, in the Hellenistic period, Strabo refers explicitly to sailing the high seas in the Mediterranean (3:2, 5).

Sailing the high seas necessarily involves sailing by night and therefore the existence of some system of orientation. Night sailing, in common with sailing out of sight of land, uses the stars to steer by and, more especially, the Pole star which forms part of the constellation of Ursa Minor. Knowledge of astronomy, which allowed the ancients to sail the open sea without risk of losing their bearings, is fully reported in Homer's epic (*Od.* 2:434; 10:28; 15:476). However the discovery of the importance of Ursa Minor for sailing by night is attributed to the Phoenicians and it is significant that the classical world called the constellation 'Phoiniké'.

The Phoenicians, then, had an excellent knowledge of astronomy many years before Homer, even though the true position of the Pole star was not determined mathematically until the fourth century BC.

The Mediterranean was and continues to be good for sailing the open sea, except in winter when fog and storms make it difficult to see the coast and the stars. In those conditions, there was no other solution, right down to the Middle Ages, but to tie up in port and await better days. But in normal conditions, boats were guided by the Pole star or else by reference to land, since it has been proved that in favourable weather conditions, with very few exceptions, the coast or the mainland is visible from any point in the Mediterranean. From

Fig. 35 Limits from which land can be seen in the Mediterranean

a map of theoretical visibility, taking in all the coasts of the Mediterranean, it is clear that there are very few parts of the sea from which at least a mountain or a high coastal range cannot be seen (Fig. 35). This is especially true along the whole northern coastline of the Mediterranean and along the African coast in the west.

According to mathematical calculations, a rock rising 9 m above sea level disappears from sight of a boat 8 miles away. The summit of a mountain 2,500 m high disappears at a distance of 125 miles. The Mulhacen or the Canigo in Spain are landmarks that present no problem in this respect. Visibility is excellent along the whole of the Iberian Peninsula, the Straits, the coasts of Morocco and Algeria and a large part of Tunisia. On the other hand, there is a large area of the sea where land visibility is much reduced: the African coast from southern Tunisia to Sinai and also between the Balearics and the islands of Corsica and Sardinia.

We can affirm, then, that the days in the Mediterranean when, in good weather, sailors cannot see land or reference points on the coast are very few. On the whole in winter, visibility does not exceed 100 m on foggy days, although a look-out posted on a mast 9 m high gains some 12 km of visibility. But in Antiquity, ships sailed in winter only in exceptional circumstances.

Fishermen today still navigate by a limited number of high-altitude points and have no need of maps or navigational instruments. A ship leaving Tyre for Gadir could do the voyage in a more or less straight line on the open sea without losing sight of land by making one slight detour northwards between the Ionian isles and Sicily.

Distances travelled, sailing periods and duration of the voyage

Throughout antiquity, sailing was restricted to periods of good weather. Except in case of war, the ships weighed anchor at the beginning of spring and returned to port in October. The period reserved for sailing was thus fairly brief, judging by the limits spoken of by Hesiod in his 'Works and days' (vv. 663–665 and 678–684): '50 days from the moment when the sun turns in the heart of drowsy summer' (the end of June till the middle of September). Nevertheless, the possibility of going to sea between March and the end of October was envisaged. Winter sailing was not widespread in the Mediterranean until the sixteenth century.

The limited number of sailing days is confirmed by other classical

authors, like Herodotus. This latter, describing the circumnavigation of Africa by the Phoenicians carried out on behalf of the pharaoh Nechao (609–594 BC), reports that when autumn arrived, the Phoenicians landed and grew wheat while they awaited a favourable period, so that the voyage lasted two years (Herod. 4:42).

We do not know the exact speed of the ships, which would depend on the type of craft and the winds and currents. Various circumstances might prolong a voyage: the type of trade; limited days suitable for sailing, which could mean that a Phoenician vessel might remain at anchor for a whole year in the same port – bad weather, lack of wind and so on. Yet, even so, it is possible to calculate the average speed of boats from the information known for the classical period. And it is possible to determine the duration of a voyage working from the average speed of the boat and the number of hours sailed daily, not forgetting days of bad weather and those spent taking on food, or resting.

In the classical period, a ship took nine days from Corinth to Leucas, nine hours from Corfu to Brindisi and fifteen days from Greece to Sicily, or even less (Thucyd. 6:1). To calculate the duration of a voyage and the speed of a boat, it is necessary to take into account not only the sailing days but the system used: oars or sail. In the sixteenth century a rowed galley, very like the Phoenician and Greek warships, needed 206 hours to cover the distance from Venice to Corfu, some 1000 miles. For a distance of 2000 miles it would need 883 hours, including time when the boats were delayed, estimated at 60 per cent of the total time. No doubt this percentage was higher in antiquity.

Herodotus calculates the average speed for day and night sailing of 600 to 700 stadia, that is 68 to 82 miles per day (Herod. 4:86, 1). This agrees with the average speed attributed to merchant ships by Thucydides (Thucyd. 2:97, 1; 3:3, 5; 6:1) and would give an average speed of some 54 stadia (6 miles) per hour, indicating that the distance between Carthage and Gadir could be covered in 7 days, that from Sicily to Crete would take a good 3 days and from Gibraltar to Pirene some 7 days (Avienus *O.M.* 560).

For long-range sailings, the known voyage of Colaios from Samos to Gadir at the end of the seventh century BC has been estimated at some 1440 sailing hours, equivalent to 60 days, to cover a distance of 2000 miles. So Colaios took two months to get to Tartessos and therefore had perforce to stay in Gadir or some other port all winter, awaiting the next sailing season.

It has been calculated that the Phocean Greeks in the sixth century took some 240 hours, equivalent to 45 days' sailing, to cover the distance of some 1360 miles in a straight line between Phocea and Ampurias. This estimate is based on the average speed of Phocean warships – the penteconters – of some 6 miles per hour. It means that the Phoceans, taking a month and a half to reach Spain, could do the return voyage in one summer. Leaving Phocea at the end of May, they could be back in September, with only fifteen days for loading and unloading merchandise in Ampurias. Such a brief stay could hardly compensate for three long months at sea.

From all these calculations it is possible to work out how long the crossing from Tyre to Gadir took; the distance as the crow flies is more that 2600 miles and would take 80 or 90 days, that is to say some 3 months. Given the limited sailing season at that period, it is obvious that ships had to remain at anchor in ports on the Straits of Gibraltar for a very long time, so a Tyrian seaborne expedition to the western Mediterranean would frequently last more than a year between the outward and return voyages.

The Phoenician ships

The first explicit mention of Phoenician ships refers to a fleet of forty merchant ships carrying cedar, which left a Phoenician port bound for Egypt around the year 3000 BC. From at least the middle of the third millennium we have evidence of large merchant ships – the 'ships of Byblos' – on the open sea, trading with Egypt. It is partly to this long experience that the reputation of the Phoenician pilots as experts in the arts of navigation is due, also that of the naval engineers of Tyre, highly valued as shipbuilders and sought after by other eastern monarchies like Israel. Byblos, Tyre and Sidon had learnt all these techniques from Egypt, a country with a long shipping tradition that had grown out of travel on the Nile, principally by sail but using oars for auxiliary propulsion.

Outstandingly important were the boats of Hatshepsut, called 'ships of the Punt'; we know their shape from the Eighteenth-Dynasty reliefs at Deir el-Bahari. These ships were very capacious and capable of sailing long distances without tying up. The space normally reserved for oarsmen was used for carrying cargo so the boats travelled under sail and were generally slow and bulky. The 'ships of the Punt' constitute the direct prototypes of the Phoenician merchant ships.

This type of boat, which was so practical for commercial voyages, was very soon adopted in the Levant and the Aegean where its round, big-bellied shape would be characteristic. In the Aegean, the crossings are shorter because of the large number of islands and the strong winds, which are more dangerous than in the Red Sea, and so oars would become more important in Cretan and Mycenaean shipping. The space intended for cargo was now reserved to accommodate an ever-increasing number of oarsmen, which meant that the ships gradually became faster and lighter. Later, the Greek world would use this type of boat equally for both commercial and warlike purposes.

In spite of the disadvantage of its lack of speed, the slower, more roomy merchant ship under sail continued to be the most suitable for long journeys in the Mediterranean. The Phoenicians were able to take advantage of all these innovations and very soon the merchant navy of the coast of Canaan was sharing the waters of the eastern Mediterranean with Egyptians and Mycenaeans, as is shown by the discovery of the ship at Cape Gelidonya, among others. The pictures in the Egyptian tomb at Kenamon, moreover, dated to the days of Amenophis II (Eighteenth Dynasty), show us merchant ships manned by Phoenician or, if you will, Canaanite sailors. These are big ships fitted with solid decks and high sides, which could undoubtedly transport plenty of freight in the hold and on deck. They are big-bellied freighters with rounded ends, driven by large square sails in the style of Hatshepsut's ships.

During the first millennium Phoenicia inherits the paunchy freighter and the Aegean type of boat, manned by more and more oarsmen and so capable of ever greater speed. Furthermore the Phoenicians are credited with inventing the keel and the ram and with caulking the joints in the planks with bitumen. They knew the adjustable sail and the double steering oar which enabled them to turn and manoeuvre very rapidly.

The Phoenicians used three main types of ship.

Local shipping

The earliest Phoenician boat is known from the bronze friezes on the gates of Balawat (ninth century BC; see Fig. 12). They are small craft rowed by one or two men, and have rounded ends and figureheads in the form of horses' heads. These are the same boats that are carrying wood in a relief at Khorsabad (see Fig. 13).

It is more than likely that this type of craft with a prow in the form

of a horse's head is the origin of the legend that Hippos the Tyrian was the inventor of cargo ships (Pliny *Nat. Hist.* 5:206). The geographer Strabo also says that in the Hellenistic period the sailors of Gadir were still using these boats, known as *hippoi* or 'horses', so called from the figure decorating the prow (Strabo 3:3, 4). The Gaditanians used these craft for fishing in the region of Lixus. Occasionally one of these fishing boats would stray too far and vanish at sea.

The *hippoi* of Gadir are consequently the direct descendants of the little Phoenician cargo boats of Balawat and Khorsabad. As lightweight craft, they seem to have been used solely for local transport and for fishing. This type of boat was still in use until very recently on the island of Malta.

Merchant ships

The cargo-carrying merchant ship is heir to the great Syrio-Canaanite ships of the second millennium. Propelled by a huge square sail, the ship had the capacity to transport victuals, provisions and merchandise. Consequently it was ideal for long voyages on the open sea. In order to gain cargo room, these ships tended to be very wide and spacious, hence their Latin name: *naves rotundae*. It was their round shape, too, that inspired the Greeks to call them *gaulos* – bathtub – equivalent to the Phoenician *gôlah*.

The *gaulos* is thought to be the Phoenician merchant ship *par excellence* and was, no doubt, the main instrument of the Phoenician diaspora westwards. Maybe the island of Gozo, near Malta, owes its name to these voluminous freighters.

In the oft-quoted Assyrian relief in the palace at Nineveh, showing the flight of king Luli of Tyre to Cyprus, these big-bellied freighters can be seen, escorted by a flotilla of warships (see Fig. 14). They are boats with a high prow and stern, dependent for their motive power almost entirely on sail. Nevertheless, they have places for oarsmen, judging by the Assyrian relief, and there could be as many as eighteen or twenty of them, used exclusively for manoeuvring, since it was necessary to reserve all the remaining space for cargo.

We do not know the maximum capacity that a Phoenician or Greek merchant ship could attain. Some of the texts from Ugarit lead us to think that, around 1200 BC, a Canaanite merchantman could have a cargo capacity of up to 450 tons. During the first millennium BC, the normal capacity of the freighters fluctuated between 100 and 500 tons.

The speed and stability of these ships depended on their capacity. With a favourable wind, they could reach some 5 knots, so they were able to cover a distance of 400 miles in 4 days (*Od.* 14:257–258).

Thanks to Wen-Amon's story, we have evidence of the existence of Phoenician merchant fleets, consisting of up to fifty ships, from the eleventh century BC. The king of Byblos and the shipowner Urkatel possessed a fleet of that kind. In the time of Hiram I, during the tenth century BC, the Tyrian merchant ships are the 'ships of Tarshish', according to the biblical texts. Originally, these were the ships that carried precious merchandise from distant lands, from the east at first and later from the Mediterranean. But we know little about what they were really like.

The power and monopoly of the royal house of Tyre in matters of sea transport rested on its ships, the *ônijât taršiś* (II Chronicles 8:18). This is the time of the greatest activity in the shipyards of Tyre, which specialized in building these great ships. There is a possibility that the name 'ships of Tarshish' was derived not from the type of boat but from the cargo and destination of these commercial voyages, as happened in the third millennium with the celebrated 'ships of Byblos'. At a period later than that of Hiram I, the same name could have come to designate the Tarsos of Cilicia and even as far west as the Mediterranean. It has also been suggested that the name 'tarsos' might have referred to their having a bank of oarsmen and that the word *ônijât* might be not Semitic but of Indo-European origin and simply designate a ship: *anaji – naus – navis*.

The warships

The third and last type of Phoenician ship was the redoubtable fighting galley, propelled by oars and fitted with a ram. In contrast to the merchant ships, this type of much lighter ship was called *navis lunga*.

In the relief of king Luli of Tyre, from the end of the eighth century BC, these galleys, which served as escort to the tubby freighters, are seen at anchor in the south harbour at Tyre. One of these ships appears with the prow facing the city and has two superimposed banks of oarsmen, five in each lower bank and four others above (see Fig. 14). Both sides of the ships are hung with shields identical to those that can be seen on the walls of Tyre, which means that they might well be transporting soldiers. We remember the words of Ezekiel (27:8 and 10) stating that the Tyrian fleet had soldiers and sailors coming from various countries. The fact is that their complement, counting soldiers

and oarsmen, amounted to some fifty men like the famous Phocean penteconters. The Greeks called these warships equipped with a double bank of oars, one above the other, 'biremes'.

Another characteristic of the Phoenician warships in the aforesaid Assyrian relief is the top of the prow, armed with a sharp-pointed ram, a distinctive feature of the fighting ship. This invention is attributed to the Phoenicians and would date from at least 800 BC. The ram made it possible to build more robust hulls but its force of impact depended above all on the speed of the boat or, which amounts to the same thing, on the number of oarsmen, which could be as high as thirty-six. This would validate the hypothesis concerning the existence of a large Phoenician fleet equipped with genuine biremes of fifty oarsmen, or penteconters.

The penteconters usually had two officers on board and sailed in fleets of up to six fighting galleys, organized like genuine combat squadrons which would sail close to the coast in order to take on victuals at night, since their loading capacity was of necessity very restricted.

Thanks to Greek pottery and classical historical references, we know a good deal about how these ships evolved in Greece, where they gradually advanced from a crew of twenty oarsmen in Homer's time to a total of thirty (triconters) or even fifty oarsmen (penteconters) later, and from a single bank of oars each side to two (bireme) and even three banks (trireme). The arrangement of two banks, one above the other on each side of the bireme in the second half of the eighth century BC, considerably increased the power of these ships. The invention of the trireme, around the year 670 BC, attributed to Sidonians and Corinthians, enabled them to house a crew of 170 oarsmen; this warship was in general use from the sixth century BC (Herod. 2:158; Thucyd. 1:13).

The warships were long, narrow boats and so rather unstable, although they could make long sea crossings in spite of the lack of space for provisions, which forced them to put in to shore from time to time. From 800 BC onwards, naval fighting units had sufficient capacity to blockade the Mediterranean ports or disrupt commercial traffic. Low and narrow, with a length of 30 or 32 m, the penteconter could manoeuvre swiftly and it was easy to hide behind a headland or small island. But it was above all a very swift ship and easy to bring alongside in shallow waters, because of its shallow draught.

The presence of oars made these ships less dependent on winds and

currents, and all that was required was intelligent coordination from the pilot. In addition to the crew, these ships could carry passengers in special circumstances. We know, for example, that when Cyrene was founded, two penteconters carrying a total of 200 to 300 colonists played a part (Herod. 7:184). Likewise, their loading capacity could be raised, judging by the account of the voyage of the Samian Colaios to Tartessos; on the return journey, his ship took on board 60 talents (some 1500–2000 kg) of silver.

Unlike the merchant ship, with a small crew and cheap to run, the warship was very expensive and difficult to equip. The example of the battle of Salamina in 480 BC is revealing in this respect: it took a total of 34,000 men to equip the 200 ships of the Athenian squadron. It is obvious that very few states could meet expenses of that magnitude. It is improbable therefore that the Phoenicians, unlike the Greeks, systematically used these galleys for their western enterprise.

The oldest known representation of a bireme fitted with a ram on the prow is in the eighth-century Assyrian relief from the palace of Sennacherib in Nineveh. It is thought that the Greeks adapted it from a Phoenician model. From the eighth century BC, this powerful offensive weapon inaugurated a new era in the tactics of naval warfare, which was to last some 1000 years. A naval battle ceased to be a confrontation between archers and lancers and became a series of successive assaults in which the first ship to strike a blow at a vital point of the enemy ship won the victory. This depended in the last resort on the coordination and manoeuvring capacity of the oarsmen.

The Phoenician penteconter attained maximum performance in the middle of the eighth century BC. An item from Menander of Ephesus, picked up by Flavius Josephus (*Ant. Iud.* 9:14), states that Salmanasar V sent an armada against Tyre composed of 60 warships with a total of 800 oarsmen and fitted out by other Phoenician cities allied to the Assyrian king. The city of Tyre, with only 12 ships, succeeded in dispersing the enemy and taking 500 prisoners. It is more probable, however, that there were sixteen, not sixty ships attacking Tyre.

The battle may have been similar to the one at Alalia (535 BC), off the coast of Corsica, or at Salamina (480 BC). The percentage of prisoners taken shows the magnitude of the Assyrian disaster, because only a battle using rams could have saved so many enemy lives, since the prisoners must have thrown themselves into the water to avoid going down with their ships. Tyre did not in actual fact disperse the Assyrian squadron, she destroyed it. This success is of the utmost

interest in that it shows the existence in the eighth century BC of a Tyrian fighting squadron made up of penteconters.

The ports

Phoenician power depended to a large extent on her maritime communications and on the good condition of her ports. Unfortunately documentation earlier than the Hellenistic and Roman periods concerning the Mediterranean ports is scanty, virtually non-existent.

The texts and the archaeological discoveries made in Ugarit reveal that the ships of the second millennium were much bigger than is usually thought, requiring harbour installations of considerable dimensions. The texts refer to Canaanite ships colliding with wharves or harbours and the Egyptian paintings and reliefs of the Eighteenth Dynasty suggest the existence of structures and footbridges in the Mediterranean ports.

Before the fourth to third centuries BC, the techniques of building walls and laying foundations under water had not been discovered. Consequently we cannot strictly speak of the existence of wharves or genuine harbour constructions before the Hellenistic period. Studies of ancient ports show that before the fourth century the conditions of the site were exploited to form harbours, either carving out the natural rock or adapting reefs or rocky islands to form moles or breakwaters for protection against the winds and currents (Fig. 36). These harbour works were frequently consolidated by building walls on top of them, giving rise to some enclosed harbour structures or lagoons up to several kilometres wide. In the absence of this kind of shelter, ships simply ran up on the beach. All along the Mediterranean coast, the Phoenicians chose the most suitable anchorages – bays and river mouths sheltered from the winds.

On the island of Tyre there were two harbours, one artificial and situated to the south of the city, perhaps carved out of the rock, and the other, in the north, a natural one, that is, making use of the configuration of the reefs. The southern harbour, looking towards Cyprus and Egypt, was better protected against winds and tides. In the Assyrian reliefs depicting the island of Tyre, the two gates in the wall of the city seem to have formed the only access to the two harbours from inside the town itself. As we saw before, the building of the southern, so-called 'Egyptian' harbour at Tyre, in the approaches to the city, is attributed to Ithobaal I. In one of Tyre's harbours were the famous

Fig. 36 Aerial view of Sidon in 1934

shipyards where old ships were broken up and new ones built (Diod. 17:46, 1). Sidon and Memphis had their own shipyards as well.

A great many of the Phoenician port establishments reproduced the Tyrian model and had twin harbours, one relatively open or external, reserved for merchant ships, and the other more protected, enclosed or internal, situated close to the walls of the city and intended for local traffic or warships. It seems that this was the case at Arvad, Sidon and Tell Sukas, among others. But the best known example is Carthage, a city which, according to the literary tradition, possessed two harbours, one commercial and the other military, in the vicinity of the sanctuary of Salammbô (Fig. 37). Unlike the commercial harbour which was rectangular or polygonal in shape, the more enclosed military harbour was shaped like an artificial lake or *cothon*, a feature peculiar to the Phoenician inner harbours. Nevertheless, the exact position of the most ancient harbour at Carthage is not known; some people site it in the bay of the Kram. Recent British excavations have established that the two harbours close to Salammbô were built

Fig. 37 Aerial view of Carthage

during the Punic wars and are consequently no earlier than the fourth century BC. The Phoenician fleet, considered to this day to be the first naval power in history, is the product of an exceedingly steep and rugged coast which, given the lack of technical development of the day, was precisely the most likely place to provide excellent harbours.

Thanks to various surveys carried out in the ancient harbours at Tyre, we know that the island of Tyre lay at the centre of a line of reefs running parallel to the coast, which protected the city from the assault of the sea and the winds, and which the Tyrians were able to adapt to make a harbour. Erosion, human intervention and a rise in sea level in the past three hundred years have submerged the ancient reefs close to the island. Morover, the mole built by Alexander the Great not only converted the island into a peninsula but disturbed the balance of the marine currents, which attacked the reef or southern harbour of the city with particular force (see Fig. 8). The few mole constructions that have been preserved under water are from the Roman period. The line of reefs around ancient Tyre made the site into an ideal anchorage with the help of simple works of adaptation, converting the rocky barriers into roadsteads or breakwaters sheltered from the winds.

The same criteria were followed in the harbours of Sidon, Arvad and Byblos. In the west, too, the small islands of Motya and Gadir, separated from the mainland by a channel protected from the winds and currents, made excellent natural harbours and reproduced more or less faithfully the model of Tyre.

The islet at Arvad also had two harbours, one enclosed or internal and the other open or external. These very favourable conditions were due to its sandstone reefs, deliberately carved and adapted on the north side so as to form a harbour structure or barrier joining the island to a tiny islet, Bint el-Arwad, a few kilometres away. This northern mole gave rise to a double harbour or channel between the islands very similar to the one we shall see at Gadir. All the harbour constructions and buttresses built in ancient Arvad date from the Hellenistic period.

Ships could lie at anchor in the open sea if conditions were unfavourable, but this meant that the cargo had to be brought to the shore or to the city in small boats. In favourable conditions, ships could moor in these rocky harbours with their sails furled and their gangplanks running from the prow of the ship directly to the coast or rocky platform.

In the west, the Phoenicians had few natural harbours combining all

the conditions of Tyre or Arvad, except in the cases of Gadir, Motya and Malta. On coasts with a steep cliff-like structure, they had to moor most of the time right up against the rocky jetty, to which they could get quite close. Where the coastline was gentler and sloped more gradually to the sea, the only option was to keep a prudent distance from the coast. Some places, however, offered unrivalled conditions for allowing ships easy access to the beach, out of reach of the winds and out of sight of other ships. This was the case in the natural bays and inlets round a river mouth, which we find on much of the eastern coast of Andalusia.

Winds and currents

Marine currents and more especially winds were the main obstacles to ancient seafaring. Currents and winds not only conditioned to a great extent the Phoenician commercial seaways, but they had important repercussions on the choice of harbour enclaves in the west, where other criteria of an economic or political nature did not intervene.

We shall start from the assumption that currents in the Mediterranean have undergone no outstanding changes in the past 3000 years. As for the winds, these have remained unchanged in the past 2000 years.

The wind was the main force for ancient seafarers and was particularly important when sailing the high seas. The techniques of the day made sailing against the wind extremely difficult and only possible by using oars or else by tacking. But it can be said that big ships avoided this method of sailing in antiquity.

Currents, on the other hand, are not a determining factor in a landlocked sea like the Mediterranean, although they are particularly dangerous in the Straits of Gibraltar, in Syrtis Major and where the Ionian Sea meets the Adriatic. In antiquity, however, currents were generally taken advantage of to help a ship's progress.

Currents

In the Mediterranean the currents are wont to be superficial, seasonal and caused by the prevailing winds. So they are variable and eminently coastal. For merchant ships loaded with metal travelling from the Iberian Peninsula, it was essential to sail with these currents, since the ships were mostly heavy freighters that were extremely slow and difficult to handle.

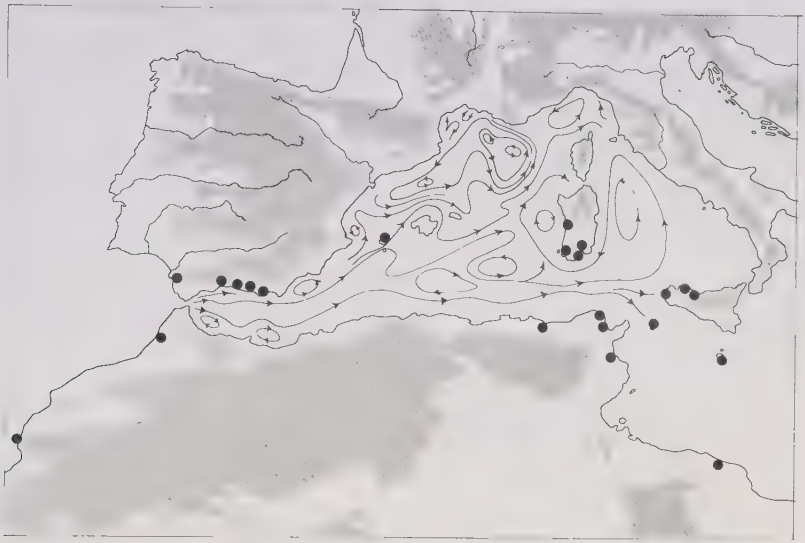


Fig. 38 Marine currents in the western Mediterranean

There is, in addition in the Mediterranean, a general current running anticlockwise (Fig. 38). It is the result of differences of temperature, evaporation and input of river waters into the Mediterranean, producing a difference of level between it and the Atlantic. This imbalance means that water is constantly coming in through the Straits of Gibraltar and the Dardanelles.

From Gadir to the Lebanon, a west–east current predominates, starting from Gibraltar and running along the African coast to Port Said, where it turns northwards, keeping close to the coast of Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor and the north of the Aegean where it then makes contact with the strong current from the Black Sea and the Dardanelles. The two combine to form a new current heading west across from the Greek coast and islands, north of Crete, past the Peloponnese and finally arriving in the Adriatic. From there the current goes up northwards along the Dalmatian coast and then comes back down the Italian coast, runs round the south of Italy, the Tyrrhenian coast and the gulf of Genoa from where it once more heads southwards along the Spanish coast to Gibraltar. Until a few centuries ago, this general current and its ramifications, combined with the wind system, conditioned the navigation charts for the open sea.

In the Straits of Gibraltar, the current from the Atlantic reaches a

Fig. 39 Prevailing winds in the western Mediterranean

speed of up to 5 or 6 knots and only begins to slacken when level with Cape Gata. Except when an east wind was blowing, which to some extent counteracts the current, the passage of the Straits of Gibraltar for a ship going from Tyre towards Gadir must have been extremely difficult. On the other hand, the reverse passage, in the direction of Oran and Algeria, for a ship coming from Gadir, poses no great problems if the vessel keeps close to the African coast, following the direction of the general current.

The wind system

In the Mediterranean, the weather is fairly good for sailing in summer, and indeed once March and April are over.

In the Straits of Gibraltar, there are only west and east winds and, according to which one predominates, it is customary to speak of westerly years or easterly years. The east winds are usually dominant in the months of March, July, August, September and December, while in the other months of the year they alternate with winds from the west, that is, the westerlies (Fig. 39).

In westerly years, that is to say when the west winds blow hard, it is particularly dangerous to go through the Straits towards the Atlantic or Gadir. We must suppose that during the eighth and seventh centu-

ries BC access to Gadir in these conditions cannot have been exactly easy. Even today, when a westerly is blowing, vessels heave to in Algeciras Bay waiting for breezes from the east, which sometimes take two months to arrive. In winter, the westerlies can be particularly violent in the region of Tarifa.

The east winds, on the other hand, can dominate in the eastern approaches to the Straits and can be particularly violent in the region of Tarifa. When westerlies and easterlies coincide in winter, it is impossible to go through the Straits.

The east winds are also dominant along the coasts of Morocco and Algeria in summer and they often blow for days on end. In the gulf of Valencia, the winds blow from the northeast and the north, and these also prevail in the Balearics. In the Tyrrhenian Sea, because of the barrier formed by Corsica and Sardinia, there are breezes from the east, while in Corsica, off Bonifacio, the westerlies prevail. On the island of Sardinia, winds usually blow from the west or north on the west coast and from the east on the east coast.

To conclude, we can state that the ancient Mediterranean sea routes, understood as the courses recommended for sailing ships on the basis of information collected over the centuries by captains and pilots, pay particular attention to the system of winds and currents. The plan of these itineraries is practically identical with that of the ancient Greek and Phoenician voyages and they provide us with an obligatory reference point when attempting to reconstruct the routes followed by the Phoenician ships in their expansion westward.

THE SEA ROUTES

It is generally thought that the sea routes taken by the Phoenicians on their voyages to the west ran along North Africa and that the return journey passed by the islands of the west-central Mediterranean.

But it is quite obvious that the Phoenicians were well able to select the most suitable places to underpin a great commercial axis, which, if we stick to the written sources, was based initially on the Tyre–Utica–Gadir route. We do not know exactly what happened at the start, that is to say, which places were destined to be staging posts for ships – to spend the winter or repair damage, or to take on water and food – and which coastal stations were occupied as permanent enclaves for commercial and economic purposes.

It must, moreover be borne in mind that the voyage of a ship loaded

with ore or silver ingots would of necessity have been of a different type from that of a ship carrying amphorae or luxury ceramics. Nor is slow and dangerous coastal navigation, allowing the development of dynamic and continuous trading, the same thing as sailing the open sea, which is swifter and safer but can accomplish very little on the way. It can definitely be said that the techniques, systems and sea routes entail clearly defined trading mechanisms and, vice versa, the type of trade governs the routes or systems of navigation.

If we stick to the system of winds and currents in the Mediterranean that we have described, and above all to the recommendations of the ancient routes, it is possible to trace in broad outline the sea routes followed by the Phoenician ships in their voyages to and from the west.

The Tyre–Gadir route

For a voyage to the west, a ship leaving Tyre had two possible routes: to the south via Egypt–Cyrenaica–gulf of Syrtes–northwest Africa, which involved sailing against the general current all the way, or else the northern route of Cyprus–Asia Minor–Ionian Sea–Sicily–Spanish Levant–Straits of Gibraltar, which in fact is the only sea route documented by archaeological finds from the Final Bronze Age, and the one that links the Mediterranean with the Atlantic metallurgy of the second millennium BC.

Furthermore, along the whole North African coastline between Cape Bon and Cyrenaica and Tripolitania no signs of ancient Phoenician shipping have been reported and this is the route that all the ancient navigators would try to avoid because of the adverse current and the dangerous passage of Syrtis Major. On the other hand, this was the most suitable route for the return voyage to Tyre, because it meant sailing with the general current.

It may be inferred from all this that the route to the west must have been the northern, island one, including Motya and Ibiza in the itinerary as nerve centres on the way to Gadir. That would explain, among other things, the vitality of centres like the island of Motya from the eighth century on. The northern route is also the only one attested by the sources, which mention Cyprus, Asia Minor or Crete as obligatory ports of call for Phoenician trade (*Od.* 15:455–458).

So this east–west route would take in the following stages: the first stop must have been Cyprus, with its chief supporting enclave at Kition, controlled by the Phoenicians since the ninth century BC.

Rounding the island to the south, the ships would have had to reach the coasts of Asia Minor from there and, leaving Cape Gelidonya behind, they would arrive at the ports of Phoiniké – the modern Finike – and Phoinix, in Caria or Lydia, facing the island of Rhodes (Thucyd. 2:69, 1). The second stage could consist of Rhodes itself, the point at which the route must have turned to the northwest, perhaps to the island of Cythera, where we can document yet another place name 'Phoinikous'. Finally the Ionian Sea was reached, and Malta, the region where the western Phoenician settlements start (Fig. 40).

As the ancient seaways suggest, the most favourable route from the Ionian Sea would pass through the channels of Malta and Sicily, bearing towards the south coast of the latter which provides shelter from the prevailing north winds. Then the route would have to cross to the south coast of Sardinia to avoid adverse currents and headwinds; from there it could make directly for the south of the Balearics.

Arriving in the western Mediterranean the chief obstacle consists of the general current from the west as well as the westerly winds, which force ships to follow the Spanish coast from Cape San Antonio and Cape Gata to the Straits. For ships travelling from Oran and western Algeria, it is advisable to sail very close to the coast as far as Cape Negro and from there make straight for the Straits of Gibraltar (Fig. 41).

In westerly years, two forces combine in the Straits against the line of travel: the wind and the general current. The westerly winds can blow for a whole month on end, making it necessary to lie up along the coast of Malaga. Ships coming from Algiers are indeed recommended to go up as far as Ibiza in these conditions; then, making a huge detour, to look for the current running down to Gibraltar. For ships coming direct from Carthage or Utica, the Straits remained closed to traffic under sail for many weeks.

To find the Straits when going east–west, ships had to avoid the African coast as far as possible after leaving Oran and choose the itinerary south of Sardinia to Ibiza and the east coast of Andalusia, that is to say, the stretches along the coast and among the islands where we in fact document the greatest density of ancient Phoenician settlements.

The passage of the Straits of Gibraltar

Sailing logbooks advise mariners not to go through the Straits in the central channel, because of the general current, and to make the

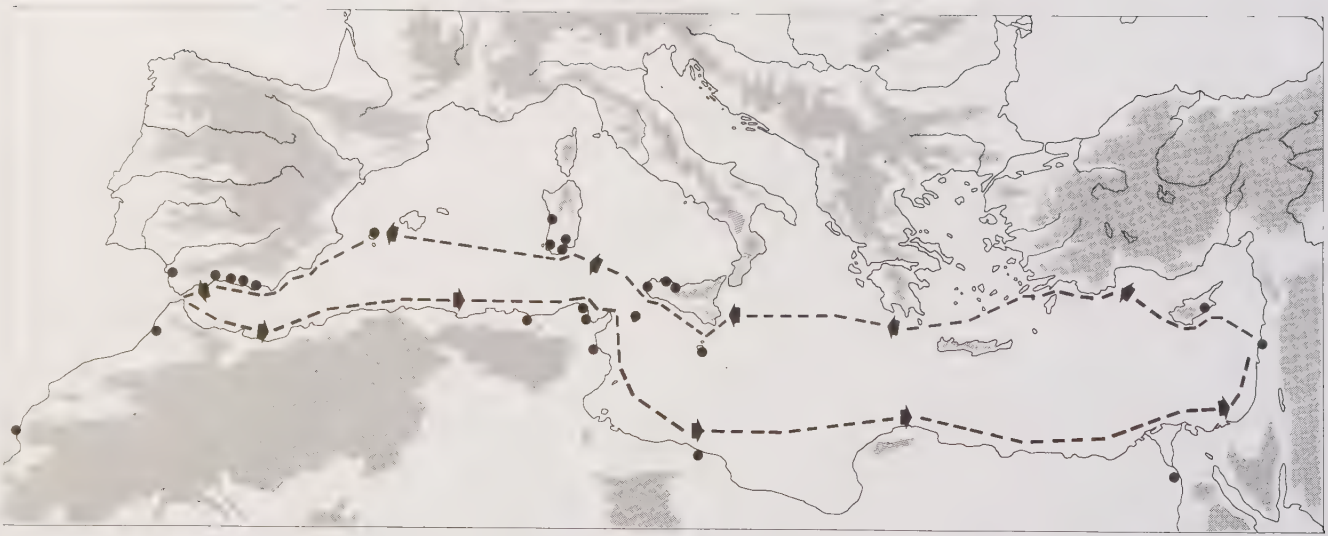


Fig. 40 Shipping routes in the Mediterranean

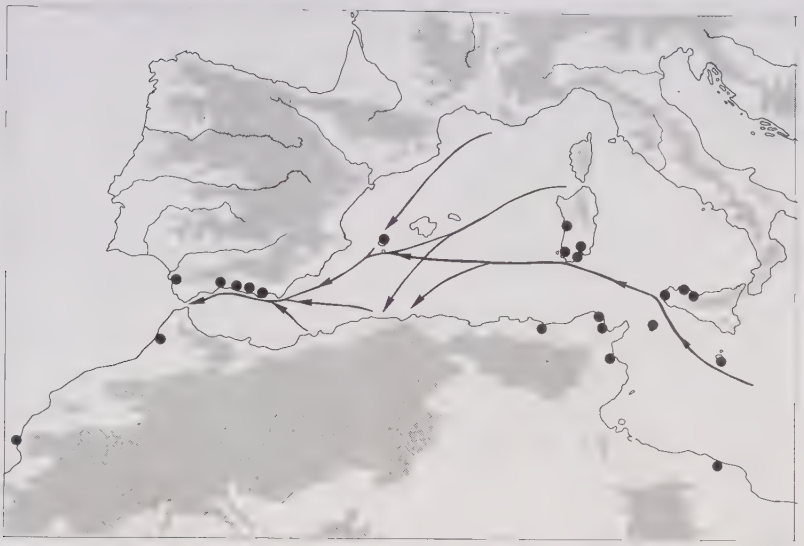


Fig. 41 East–west routes in the western Mediterranean

passage in summer, with an easterly wind. They likewise recommend approaching the Spanish coast from the Cape of Palos and keeping very close to it from Gata to the Mountains of Estrepona, from where the Peñón divides. In the case of a persistent west wind, the only thing to do is to take refuge in the harbours of Malaga and Fuengirola. Thus the last part of the route to Gadir runs a very short distance from the coast of Almería, Granada and Malaga, where classical tradition places a 'multitude' of Phoenicians in Abdera, Sexi and Malaka.

It is not always possible to choose the moment to approach a passage of the Straits towards Gadir. For ships and freighters kept waiting for days or months for a favourable wind, the coast of Malaga is a good support base and permanent refuge. In antiquity, the passage must have been difficult, especially if heavy merchant ships had to be manoeuvred in a headwind. It is reported that such an eventuality might even make it necessary to disembark in order to go and sacrifice to Melqart (Avienus *O.M.* 365). To avoid going through the Straits, an overland route was sometimes advisable, starting from Malaka (Avienus *O.M.* 178–182). The overland route from Malaga to Tartessos entailed some four days to get there and another five days back and it offered a possible alternative for anyone wanting to avoid waiting a whole month in Malaga for the west winds to abate. A wait

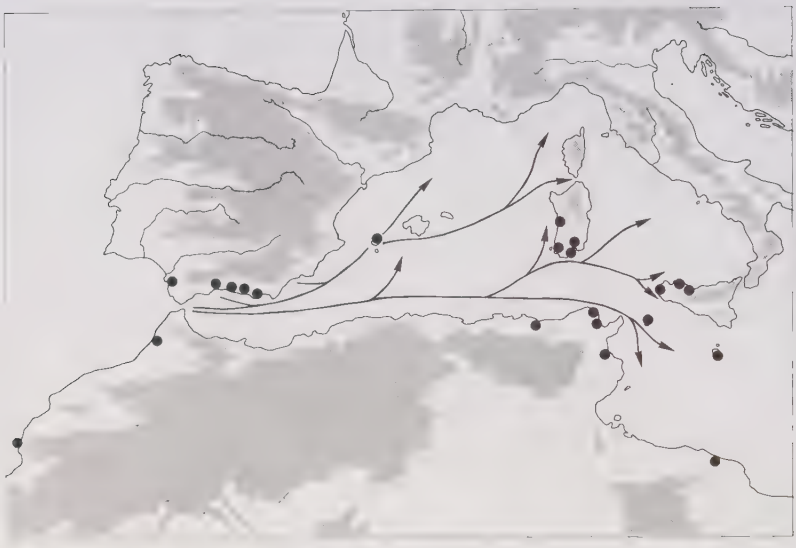


Fig. 42 West–east routes in the western Mediterranean

like that might prejudice an important transaction and, worse still, definitively delay the return trip to the east if winter arrived. A delay of a month could be decisive for a ship coming from Tyre and would leave the crew stranded for a whole year at the entrance to the Straits.

The Gadir–Tyre route

Sailing from west to east did not present such difficulties in summer and with westerly winds. Even so, access from Gadir to the Mediterranean is not always easy and even less so in the region of Tarifa and Trafalgar. Once again, the seaways and navigation charts are unanimous in considering the stretch of coast from Malaga to Motril, and in particular the anchorages at Vélez-Malaga and Almuñécar, as places of easy access.

The general recommendation is to go through the Straits in the central channel, making use of the general current to head easily and directly for Sardinia or Algeria. Only a strong east wind could make this last stretch difficult to get through. With a west wind it is advisable to sail down the centre of the channel from Malaga-Almería to the Balearics, thus making use of the current. With east winds, on the other hand, the course plans recommend getting to windward on the

coast of Algeria and from there to make for the Balearics or Bonifacio (Fig. 42). This detour is in response to the persistent north winds in the gulf of Valencia and the channel between Catalonia and the Balearics. From Alicante and Cartagena, too, the route passing to the south of the Balearics to head for Sardinia is better. In short, the route from Gadir to Sardinia had perforce to take in Ibiza.

In favourable conditions and especially in summer, however, the most suitable route to the east is the one running close to the African coast, which keeps the ship in the general current and enables it to sail to Carthage, Pantelleria, Malta and Tyre without difficulty. To head for Sicily, it is necessary to manoeuvre along the south coast of Sardinia, an itinerary that should be avoided, however, in easterly winds.

The Atlantic route

The Phoenicians used secondary and, of course, Atlantic routes, like the one from Gadir to Lixus. It is acknowledged that there could have been coastal navigation on the Atlantic route, judging by the siting of the Phoenician emplacements on the Moroccan coast. But the beaches and inlets along the Moroccan coast are less sheltered than those on the Mediterranean, and east winds and frequent storms from the northwest are prevalent there. Once past the point of Monte Abyla and before reaching the Atlantic, there are no more natural harbours, other than the bay of Tangier, ancient Tingis, a Carthaginian foundation of the sixth century BC. After Tingis, the coast is inhospitable until the fertile valleys of the Gharb and the Loukkos are reached. Lixus, on the mouth of the Loukkos, forms the main focus of ancient Phoenician trade in the region. To the south lies the great Phoenician trading establishment on the island of Mogador, frequented in the seventh century BC by Phoenician or Gaditanian ships.

It has been further conjectured that Gaditanian navigators may possibly have travelled as far as the Canaries or the Azores in pursuit of the fishery resources of the area, but nothing has so far been found to confirm this.

The circumnavigation of Africa associated with Phoenician navigators suggests that they attempted to engage in carefully planned seafaring expeditions. An expedition of this type is mentioned in connection with the pharaoh Nechao who, around the year 596 BC, financed a Phoenician voyage which took three years to accomplish its

objectives (Herod. 4:42). There is a report of another similar periplus, organized this time as a Carthaginian state expedition which, under the command of Hannon, aspired to found colonies on the Atlantic coast of Africa and consolidate existing trading posts. Hannon's expedition got as far as Lixus at the end of the sixth century BC and, further south, founded the colony of Cerne, which some authorities situate in Senegal or the Cameroon. We know that Hannon sailed along the coast and made good profits, acquiring ivory, gold and skins.

Conclusions

The most advisable route for sailing from Tyre to Gadir had of necessity to go via Sardinia, Ibiza and the Mediterranean coast of Andalusia. The return voyage had to follow the African coast via Carthage and Utica and thence to Egypt and the Levant, or else it had to make a detour via Ibiza and Sardinia. In the west it was important to avoid at all costs crossing the Syrtis and, in westerly winds, going through the centre of the Straits of Gibraltar. In adverse conditions, the route from Africa to Gadir went right up to Ibiza. Interesting conclusions can be drawn from all this.

In the first place, merchant ships sailing to Gadir from the east rarely had to drop anchor at Carthage, since that city was an obligatory port of call on the return voyage to Tyre. Thus the sea routes to Gadir did not usually go via Carthage; this would explain the relative independence of the great North African metropolis shown by the Phoenician colonies in Andalusia in the eighth and seventh centuries BC.

In the second place, in the shipping circuits, the islands of Motya and Ibiza were obligatory ports of call on both the outward and return voyages. Ibiza, in particular, stands out as an important goal for sailors in the western Mediterranean, both on the routes to the south and on journeys to the Strait of Bonifacio or on the routes heading for Gibraltar. Consequently it must have been a strategic point of vital importance on all the Tyre–Gadir–Tyre routes, since all the conditions of an ancient settlement came together there. Even when Ibiza is deemed to be a Carthaginian foundation of the seventh century BC (Diod. 5:16, 2–3), everything leads us to think that Ebusus could have been in existence as an enclave from the eighth century BC. What is more, the morphology of the little archipelago conforms to the preferred model of a site for the Tyrians in the west.

In the third place, the density of ancient Phoenician population along the coasts of Almería, Granada and Malaga could very well be explained in terms of a more or less obligatory coastal shipping route for all ships travelling to Gadir. In adverse conditions, Phoenician ships could find themselves forced to remain a whole year at anchor in the mouths of the Adra, the Seco, the Vélez or the Guadalhorce. All this is in contrast to the depopulation characteristic of the Mediterranean coast of Morocco and part of Algeria during the eighth and seventh ceturies BC, for reasons we need not reiterate here.

And lastly, the evidence shows that, with the colonial foundations in Malta, western Sicily, southwest Sardinia, Ibiza, Carthage and Gadir, the Phoenicians built up a kind of 'Phoenician triangle' in the west that was practically impregnable and provided its naval and commercial traffic with a solid support point and a monopoly of all the access routes to the southwest Mediterranean. This triangle virtually closed the Straits of Gibraltar to Greek competition and would be the foundation of the future Carthaginian maritime strength, when Carthage converted this efficient trading network into an instrument of political power.

The most westerly apex of the triangle was Gadir, which controlled access to the Straits of Gibraltar and conditioned a large part of this Mediterranean maritime circuit. Control of the Gaditanian archipelago meant, among other things, direct access to a territory that was one of the richest in metal resources in the west. The establishment of a Phoenician enclave in Gadir, so difficult of access to shipping, could only have been envisaged because of its privileged position *vis-à-vis* Tartessos; so its original function must be deemed to have been that of a place of transit for merchandise and a way into the Atlantic ores.

7

The Phoenicians in the west: chronology and historiography

The hypotheses so far formulated about the origins and chronology of the first Phoenician foundations in the west are almost infinite in number. The profound divergences between the archaeological record and the dates attributed by classical historians to the founding of Gadir, Lixus and Utica have long fostered a search for compromise solutions to reconcile two almost irreconcilable types of dates. These have moved from exaggerated defence of a horizon of pre-colonial activity in the west during the twelfth to eighth centuries BC, characterized by 'silent' trade or simple barter, which would have left hardly any archaeological traces, to claiming an ancient chronology for certain archaeological materials, most of them isolated and out of context, which would demonstrate the presence of Phoenician peoples in the western Mediterranean from the beginning of the first millennium.

The polemics are not over, far from it. Nevertheless, it is worth emphasizing here the fragility of many of the arguments urged today by those who postulate Phoenician pre-colonization, and situating the ideological and socio-political context in which some of the historical analyses of the question, both classical and modern, belong.

Nowadays, none of the criteria formerly used to vindicate the historical truth of the statements of a Velleius Paterculus or a Diodorus enjoys much credit among the experts. In spite of that, any more or less isolated or sporadic archaeological find can revive the polemics initiated among us in the middle of the nineteenth century, and will doubtless continue to do so in the future.

All this means that there is an underlying question of methodology behind this problem which inevitably boils down to a more or less subjective reading of the historico-archaeological data.

In this book, we cannot dodge the question of chronology. On it depends the objectivity or otherwise of the analysis of the meaning

and character of the Phoenician settlements in the west. In this sense, to consider the western establishments as the end result of a more or less long-term process of trial and error and barter, like the one described by Herodotus on the Atlantic coasts of Africa (Herod. 4:96), is not the same as to interpret the Phoenician expansion as a socio-economic phenomenon, arising from needs that are of an equally economic nature, but are concrete and set within a defined time space.

It is therefore a matter of priority to identify the existence or otherwise of a pre-colonial stage in the west and to discuss the interpretation, more widespread among present-day specialists, that defends the existence of a series of trading posts in the west which developed during the eighth and seventh centuries BC into urban colonies.

CLASSICAL HISTORIOGRAPHY: GADIR, HERACLES AND THE PHOENICIANS

The majority of the myths and legends concerning the arrival of the Phoenicians in the west begin to take shape in the Hellenistic period, that is to say, a little more than 500 years after the events they relate took place. So these are late sources, far removed from the facts, necessarily subjective and, as we shall see, with scant guarantees of reliability.

The question revolves around the famous reference by the Roman historian Velleius Paterculus (*Hist. Rom.* 1:2, 1–3), which placed the founding of Gadir eighty years after the Trojan War, that is around the year 1104 or 1103 BC. All the classical authors who allude to the origins of Gadir–Gades (Strabo, Mela, Pliny) confine themselves to reproducing the Velleius version, with hardly any variations, which cannot but be significant.

It is possible that Velleius' source of information in turn was Timeus or Tauromenius, who was writing at the end of the fourth or the beginning of the third century BC and is not exactly distinguished for the accuracy of his knowledge of Iberia, and this illustrates in principle the poor reliability of the original sources of information.

It is therefore particularly interesting to know the intellectual environment in which the first accounts concerning the founding of Gadir, and consequently the chronology of the origins of the Phoenician expansion to the west, were produced.

In the first place, the Hellenistic period is characterized by the great confusion that prevailed about the date and place of arrival of the first

Phoenicians in the west. Furthermore, the other constant that we find among the historians of the period is the tendency, which may have arisen in an Alexandrian or Athenian environment, to consider the poems of Homer as historical. Within this Hellenistic and Roman current and especially in pseudo-historicist intellectual contexts, there is another feature, closely connected with the previous one: manipulation of etymologies in the face of the enormous quantity of data associated with the Trojan War, particularly the accounts by Homer of the return of the heroes – the *nostoi*. So phantasy, imagination and ingenuity combine in an attempt to transfer the main heroes of the Trojan War to the west. This is how the legendary journeys of Aeneas to Latium and of Ulysses, Anfilocus, Antenor and Theucros to Iberia (Strabo 3:2, 13; Pausanias 1:28, 11) arose. None of these legends, which arose in the fourth century BC, has any historical foundation.

The Hellenistic tendency to ennoble the origin of some western cities, the obsession with fixed dates (like that of the fall of Troy) and the exaggerated respect for Homer as a historical source mean that various traditions relative to the far west have been amalgamated and chronologies adjusted to the period of the Homeric heroes. Thus, mingling historical reality, fiction and pseudo-erudition, the desire to exalt the voyages to the far west in mythology means that Hellenistic historiography will seek eponymous heroes as founders of colonies. Very soon, the voyages of Heracles are linked with Gadir and Spain and, with them, the legend of the return of the Heraclides after the Trojan War (Strabo 1:1, 4: 3:2, 13). Hence the idea that the Greek hero-god had died in Spain (Sallust, *Bell. Jug.* 1:8, 3; Mela 3:46).

The assimilation of Gadir to the Phoenicians, to the Trojan War and to Heracles, is a typical Hellenistic arrangement. Significantly, this legend arose in the period (second to first centuries BC) in which the grandeur and prosperity of Cadiz and the prestige of its sanctuary to Hercules, visited by illustrious figures from the political and intellectual life of the day like Hannibal, Polibius, Fabius Maximus and Julius Caesar, exercised an enormous influence on Hellenistic thought. No doubt all this helped to forge a legend in which Heracles–Hercules (Melqart) finally became mixed up in the Phoenician founding of Gadir.

The myth of Heracles in Iberia seems to have arisen in fourth-century Athens, when the god-hero began to be identified with the Tyrian Melqart. At that time it was already known that the temple of Heracles in Gadir was 'very ancient' (Diod. 5:20, 1–4), so that

Heracles–Melqart came to be confused automatically with any voyages to the far west and so linked with Gadir, that is to say, the Phoenicians, its founders. And so Heracles became transformed into the father of the Phoenicians.

In order to be able to transfer the voyages of Heracles to Spain and associate them with the founding of the temple in Cadiz – the Gaditanian Heracleion of the Hellenistic period – it was necessary to situate the events in the myth of the return of the Heraclides to Greece after the Trojan War. The only solution was to move the chronologies of the founding of the colonies in the west closer to the dates associated with the Trojan War, an event, moreover, that supplied the first historical date known to the Greeks.

Gadir, the Phoenicians, Heracles and Melqart and, indirectly, the founding of Lixus and Utica, were mixed up in one and the same block of legends, into which other myths connected with the far west were gradually incorporated: the Garden of the Hesperides and the Columns of Hercules. The Garden of the Hesperides (Hesiod *Teog.* 215–216; 274–275) came to symbolize the end of the Ocean and – how could it be otherwise? – one of the goals of the travels of Heracles; and the Columns, which perhaps at first designated pillars or altars marking the limits of the travels to Greeks and Phoenicians, came in the end to symbolize the Straits of Gibraltar themselves (Pindar *Nemeas* 3:20; Strabo 4:5, 5–6).

In any case, only the Hellenistic incorporation of the myth of Heracles into Iberia, assimilated to the report of far-off Phoenician foundations in the west, and the equally Hellenistic tendency to ennoble the origins of cities as prestigious as Gades, could have justified setting a date in the twelfth century BC for the founding of the temple in Gadir, that is to say, for the arrival of the Phoenicians in the west.

The inconsistency of the classical sources dealing with the founding of Gadir and the belated and pseudo-erudite context in which they were produced will not, in our opinion, stand up to rigorous historical analysis.

MODERN HISTORIOGRAPHY

The first important epigraphic discoveries in the west in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the birth of oriental studies in the middle of the nineteenth century produced a resurgence of the legends about

the first Phoenician foundations and their mythical mastery of the sea. All this meant that their history in the ambit of the Mediterranean was exaggerated.

Within this Phoeniciophile current, two monumental and all-embracing studies stand out, that of Movers (1841–1856) and, later, that of Bérard (1902–1903), both of whom came to regard the Mediterranean as a genuine 'Phoenician lake'. With a glaring exaggeration of the role played by the Phoenicians in the Mediterranean, these two authors maintained that they had reached the west before the twelfth century BC, that during the tenth century BC, in the days of Hiram I, they already possessed flourishing colonies in northwest Africa and in Spain, and that from Gadir they had sailed into the Atlantic from Brittany to the Niger. In cultural and intellectual matters, Greece and Rome were indebted to the Phoenician civilization.

But at the end of the nineteenth century, as a result of the spectacular discoveries made by Heinrich Schliemann, and by Evans in Crete and Mycenae, and with the discovery of traces of the Greeks throughout the Mediterranean, the roles began to be reversed. With no more than a few Phoenician epigraphs in the west, the reaction was inevitable and in a very short time produced an anti-Phoenician current fundamentally opposed to the early chronologies for the founding of Gadir and Utica. This current of thought is part of the movement making Eurocentrist claims, opposed to the traditional diffusionism that saw the east as the cradle of European civilization, and convinced that not everything in the Mediterranean was Phoenician. Historians like Salomon Reinach (1893) and Julius Beloch (1894) ended by driving the Phoenicians definitively out of the Aegean and the Mediterranean, dismissing Phoenician colonization as a myth. This pro-Greek tendency in the colonization of the Mediterranean is not out of keeping with the anti-Semitic and European colonialist sentiments of the day, of which Leonard Woolley would be the chief exponent.

Reinach and Beloch defended the greater antiquity of the Greek element throughout the Mediterranean and denied the existence of major Phoenician activity in the west before the eighth century BC. In short, they denied any historical accuracy to the classical sources, going so far as to suggest that authors like Herodotus and Thucydides – the latter being charged with ineptitude – had been 'victims of the illusion of believing that Homer had been a historian'. The followers of this hyper-critical current, which lasted until 1940, men like Carpenter (1933, 1958) and Bosch Gimpera (1928–1929), had

strong arguments to hand, since no trace of the Phoenicians was recorded in the west before the eighth to seventh centuries BC. At that time the polemics had developed into a fight between those who defended the priority of the Greeks (Europeanists) and supporters of the Phoenicians (Orientalists) in the discovery of the west.

Although, between 1920 and 1930, the discoveries at Byblos and Ugarit were already taking place and the necropolis of Carthage and that of Cadiz were being routinely excavated, the Phoenician question received no new impetus until 1941, with the works of Albright. In Spain, García Bellido was at that time initiating a critical analysis of the classical texts, basing the arguments for the first time on the archaeological record. Positions were reconciled and the polemics gradually relaxed until, in our own day, we have reached the point of accepting a degree of contemporaneity in the dates. Even so, differences are being established between Greek and Phoenician colonization and distances maintained: the Greek enterprise appears to have derived from colonialist ideas and the Phoenician enterprise to have been content with founding trading establishments close to indigenous communities.

At present, there is no known indication earlier than the eighth century which would allow us to speak of Phoenician colonization in the west before that date. However, certain archaeological discoveries and the still considerable weight of classical historiography have given rise to a variety of stances in relation to the question of chronology, ranging from those who place Phoenician expansion in the eighth and seventh centuries BC, based on archaeological evidence (Carpenter, Cintas, Culican, Forrer) through those who date it to the ninth century BC on the basis of epigraphic finds (García Bellido, Harden), to those who push the colonization back as far as the twelfth century BC.

The boom in Phoenician archaeology in the past ten years and, in particular, the work done in the Iberian Peninsula, have enabled us to get away from extremes in the historical interpretation of the Phoenician question and to ease the antagonistic positions by means of a compromise solution. This establishes two stages in the Phoenician colonization of the west, a pre-colonial stage (twelfth to eighth centuries BC) and a colonial stage proper (eighth to sixth centuries BC).

We shall now enumerate the chief characteristics of what is understood by the 'pre-colonial horizon' followed by a critical assessment of the main arguments in its favour.

PRE-COLONIZATION?

The idea of proposing some pre-colonial seafaring activity by the Phoenicians in the west springs from a new attempt to establish a bridge-hypothesis between the historical dates for the first foundations in the west in the twelfth century BC and the archaeological evidence which does not record any permanent settlements before the eighth century BC. It is hoped thereby to fill an awkward gap of something more than three hundred years and incorporate a theoretical model used successfully for Greek colonization.

Modern criticism rejects the idea of genuine colonization in the twelfth century BC even though it suggests that archaeological documentation might not always coincide with a real Phoenician presence in a settlement, at least in its early days. In other words, even when the archaeological record affirms the presence of colonists in a site from, say, the year 750 BC, that does not mean that they had not arrived in that place earlier. Quite simply, archaeology is unable to detect it. It is stated likewise that archaeology is incapable of identifying semi-permanent or pre-colonial settlements during the first three hundred years of a Phoenician presence in the west. Obviously, we cannot subscribe to this claim which, at bottom, contains a profound lack of confidence in modern techniques of field archaeology.

By pre-colonization is meant a movement of maritime and commercial expansion with a view to seeking raw materials and without permanent settlements; this would usually reveal itself in the archaeological record through an oriental influence on the indigenous socities involved, like the Sardinians, the Sicilians and the Tartessians. Contingently, this phenomenon would be accompanied by the establishment in due course of small groups of craftsmen, ceramicists or metallurgists. As a general rule, a pre-colonization, characterized by the circulation of luxury articles and prestige gifts, would imply a very simple trade by barter, which would leave hardly any archaeological traces and would directly precede colonial settlements proper. In Italy and in the Iberian Peninsula, this pre-colonial stage would be dated roughly between the end of the tenth and the beginning of the eighth centuries BC.

Generally speaking this would be Phoenician shipping activity for exclusively commercial ends, setting up ports of call here and there and reproducing the model of Hiram and Solomon's ships which sailed every three years in search of noble metals. With the founding of

Carthage at the end of the ninth century BC, one western enterprise would be completed and then would begin the count back or, if you like, the start of the next stage.

This pre-colonial model has allowed us, above all, definitively to invalidate certain extreme positions, like those supporting the climax of Phoenician expansion in the days of Hiram I, that is to say, in the tenth century BC, or those that hinted at an early Phoenician presence in the exploitation of silver mines in southeastern Iberia in the days of El Argar.

The criteria used by the defenders of this model of Phoenician pre-colonization are not easy to ascertain. They often mix critical analysis with a desire or hope to see the dates handed down by the classical authors for the founding of Gadir or Utica confirmed some day.

It is vitally important, when we are weighing up the significance of the first Phoenician installations in the west, to know whether or not a more or less prolonged period of trade by barter existed before the first permanent establishments. The analysis we make of the expansion will vary according to whether we opt for this hypothesis or not: seeing it either as a complex process of internal socio-economic development from a stage of initial trading posts to genuine urban colonies or, on the other hand, as a genuine population strategy, with no previous stages, with all the consequent demographic and colonial implications.

The arguments in favour of the existence of Phoenician pre-colonization (twelfth to tenth centuries BC) rest exclusively on various archaeological materials from Italy and the Iberian Peninsula. Let us see what these materials are, on which the hypothesis of pre-colonization is based.

'Canaanite' elements in the west

For a long time, various archaeological materials have served as a basis for claiming that Phoenicians were present in the west even during the thirteenth to twelfth centuries BC. A case in point is a group of decorated ivories from the Carmona region, in the province of Seville; the incision technique was linked with that of the Canaanite ivories of the second millennium BC. Nowadays, this hypothesis has been discounted as it was based exclusively on features of technique, without taking account of the decorative style and the iconography of the Carmona pieces, which match that of Phoenician craftwork of the eighth and seventh centuries in every way.

A bronze statuette, 35.2 cm tall, discovered in 1955 32 km from

Fig. 43 Bronze statuette of the so-called 'Reshef' from Selinunte

Selinunte (Sicily) and considered to be of an Ugaritic or Canaanite type, was dated to the fourteenth to thirteenth centuries BC, on the basis of its eastern parallels, although the date was brought forward to the thirteenth to twelfth centuries BC so as to bring it closer to the chronology of the earliest Phoenician foundations in the west (Fig. 43). The figure represents a Syrio-Canaanite deity, apparently Reshef, and probably travelled in a ship that sank off the south coast of Sicily. Its presence in this area would to a certain extent support the remarks of Diodorus and Thucydides, who report the arrival of the Phoenicians on the island 'before' the end of the eighth century BC (Diodorus 5:35, 5; Thucyd. 6:2, 6).

More convincing hypotheses connect the statuette with the late second-millennium trade that linked the Aegean and Mycenaean world with Italy and the islands of the central Mediterranean. In any case, it is an isolated find and outside any archaeological context and is obviously in every way inadequate for formulating a hypothesis about pre-colonization. As an example, various Egyptian objects discovered in the Phoenician necropolis at Almuñécar are dated, strictly speaking, to the sixteenth to ninth centuries BC, judging by the hieroglyphic inscriptions. But, unlike Selinunte, we know the actual context

Fig. 44 Bronze statuettes found in the sea at Huelva

of their provenance: a necropolis in use from the end of the eighth to the middle of the seventh centuries BC. The correct reading of the find is that the Phoenicians used genuine Egyptian 'antiquities' from the plundering of Egyptian royal tombs, as funeral urns.

Moreover, we must point out that bronze statuettes very similar to the one from Selinunte have been discovered recently in Huelva and Cadiz (Fig. 44). A rigorous analysis of the pieces has shown clearly

that production of this type of bronze went on in the eastern Mediterranean until the seventh century BC, preserving all its archaizing features. Strictly speaking, then, an isolated piece is consequently of little significance when it comes to inferring a historical reading.

Tarshish–Gadir–Tartessos

Another argument that has been used repeatedly to support the hypothesis of Phoenician pre-colonizing activity refers to the biblical Tarshish, of which the presumed syllabic relationship with Tartessos is deemed sufficient to demonstrate the existence of Phoenician shipping in the west from the tenth century BC. Thus the identification of Tarshish with Tartessos, defended by certain specialists, would not only imply regular shipping traffic between Tyre and the lower Guadalquivir, but would situate the goal of the voyages promoted by Solomon and Hiram I in the Atlantic. This explains why this hypothesis has long been the most controversial, in spite of being more reasonable in chronological terms, since it visibly distances itself from the remote and compromised dates of the twelfth century BC.

Furthermore, as we shall see shortly, the question of Tarshish–Tartessos, in addition to having provided a compromise solution to fill the gap from the twelfth to the eighth centuries, starts from a false premise: the supposition that the biblical term designated the name of a place, when, in reality, it was not used as a place name in the Old Testament before the sixth to fifth centuries BC. The biblical texts mention the term Tarshish over a period of 400 years and its meaning varies according to the period, the author or the translation. Even today, we still do not know the exact meaning in Hebrew of the word Tarshish.

The oldest known biblical references are found in the chronicles of the reigns of Solomon and Jehosaphat, in the first Book of Kings, where the famous 'Tarshish ships' are mentioned as leaving Eziongeber bound for Ophir in search of gold, silver, ivory, apes and peacocks (1 Kings 9:26–28). Every three years, the ships returned with their tropical cargo to some vague place on the Red Sea. If at the beginning the term Tarshish perhaps indicates a port of destination, in the days of Jehosaphat the term alludes to a class of ship which again sails to Ophir (1 Kings 22:49). The goal of the voyage is still Ophir and not the west.

It has been mooted that the root of the word, *ršš*, might mean pre-

cious stone, perhaps topaz or jasper, from the Red Sea – Egypt or the Sudan – or maybe smelting or metal refining. In any case the Book of Kings refers to merchant ships making long voyages, but not to the Mediterranean or the west, which the biblical texts consider to be 'terra incognita'. In the period when the biblical word emerges, the geographical horizon of the Hebrews was very restricted and did not extend beyond Cyprus and the Aegean. So it could hardly designate an Atlantic territory.

The Book of Kings is followed in chronological order by the text of Isaiah (2:16), in which the 'Tarshish ships' are synonymous with the wealth, luxury and arrogance of Tyre, in contrast with other biblical references in which Tarshish clearly designates a precious stone (Exodus 28:20; Ezekiel 1:16; 10:9).

Only after the sixth to fifth centuries BC is the term Tarshish used as a place name in the Mediterranean (Genesis 10:4). Indeed, in Genesis, which was compiled much later, Tarshish appears as a daughter of Yawan (Greece), or, in later translations of the third to second centuries BC, it indicates the sea, Carthage itself or even Gadir. From this Mediterranean Tarshish, silver, iron, tin and lead arrive in Tyre. So the tropical cargo of former times has disappeared and at this time the classical authors are already claiming to situate the toponym in Tarsus in Cilicia, an identification to which modern authors also subscribe.

Those who advocate situating Tarshish in Spain place equal weight on an Assyrian inscription of Asarhadon, dated to the year 671 BC, which alludes to the capture of Tyre and to Assyrian conquests in the 'West', where that king was master of the sea as far as Tar-si-si. In addition to being a classic epigraph of political propaganda, Asarhadon's text shows complete ignorance of Mediterranean geography beyond Iadnana (Cyprus). What is more, if we accept that Tarsisi was Tartessos, we should have to allow that the frontiers of the Assyrian empire extended to the Iberian Peninsula, which would be ridiculous.

The idea of placing Tarshish in Spain surfaces in post-biblical historiography and above all in the mediaeval lexicons to the Bible. But the Tarshish–Tartessos equation does not gather strength until the seventeenth century. The Rio Tinto copper mines were baptized with the name of Tharsis when they were rediscovered in the nineteenth century.

In conclusion, let us say that the term Tarshish evolved with time – a destination on the Red Sea, a type of merchant ship, a precious stone – and its original meaning was lost as the centuries passed until it met up

with another equally vague term – Tartessos – in the Hellenistic–Roman period.

Indeed, in the classical period confusion already reigned on the subject of Tartessos, which first designated a river flowing down full of silver (Estesicorus, in Strabo 3:2, 11) and, later, a fabulous realm, rich in silver, whose kings lived for 150 years (Herod. 1:163; 4:152). The idea of identifying Tartessos with a *polis* came very late indeed.

During the first century BC, the legend of this western Eldorado faded from memory until it became confused with Gadir–Gades. This Gadir–Tartessos muddle gave rise to legends of mythical founders like Norax, the founder of Nora, and the idea of a city was born because such a rich, cultured and advanced indigenous society could be nothing other, to Greek minds, than an urban society (Strabo 3:1, 6).

The fact is that the whole legend of the fabulous Tartessos arose when Tartessos had already disappeared (Diodorus 5:35, 4; Strabo 3:2, 14). The only reality is the existence of a Phoenician colony – Gadir – located close to Tartessos, a territory rich in silver on the lower Guadalquivir.

The Nora stele

It is generally accepted that the inscribed stele from Nora is the most ancient Phoenician find in the west. It was found in 1773 near Pula, the ancient Nora, and contains one of the most discussed epigraphs that has appeared in the western Mediterranean (Fig. 45). Since it was published (1835), the inscription on the stele, like other Sardinian epigraphs from the same region of Nora, has been used to establish a very ancient chronology for the first colonial foundations on the island of Sardinia. On purely epigraphic criteria, the Phoenician inscription on the Nora stele is placed almost unanimously at the end of the ninth century BC.

The inscription, carved on a stele of a monumental type, seems to commemorate the building of a temple (*lbt*) dedicated to the god *Pmy* on the island of Sardinia (*b šrdn*). It probably recalls the arrival of a few Phoenicians in Nora; it was customary to commemorate such an arrival by building a temple, as happened in Gadir, Lixus or Utica. The deity, in this case Pumay, sanctioned the choice and appropriation of a territory rich in iron and argentiferous lead. In addition, the monumental inscription served as a message to sailors arriving on the

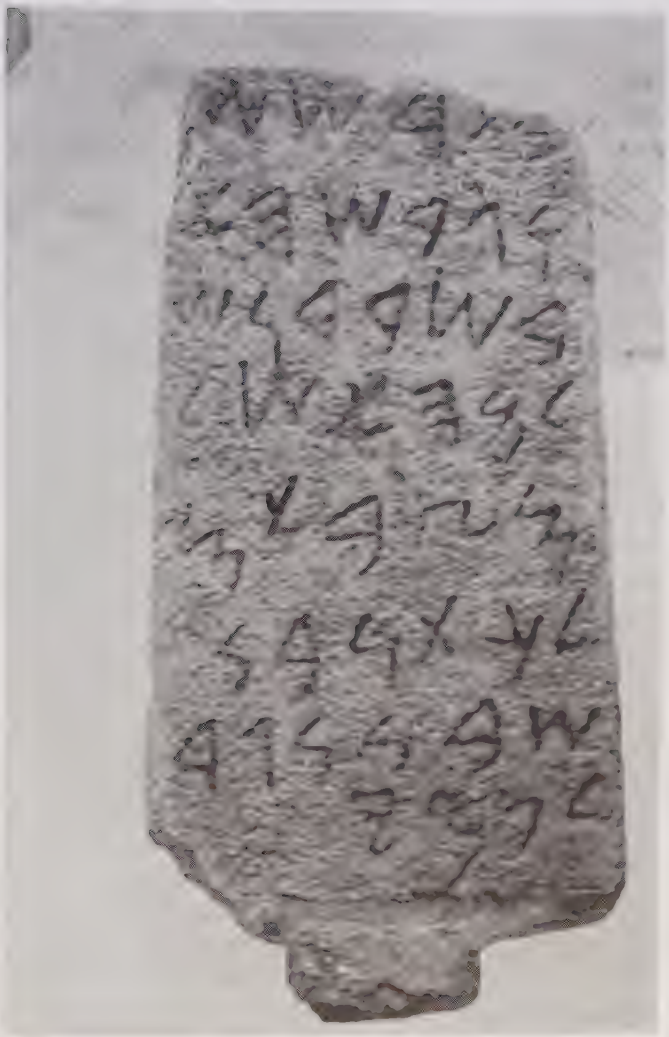


Fig. 45 The Nora stele

Sardinian coasts, as did the god Melqart in Cadiz. Lastly, the chronology attributed to the Nora stele would confirm the quotation from Pausanias (10.17. 5), according to which Nora would have been the most ancient city in Sardinia.

The significance of the presence of the god Pumay in Sardinia is not known. This is a deity usually connected with Cyprus, particularly

with Kition, where kings' names of Phoenician stock have been confirmed from the fourth century BC, in the form of Pumaijaton or Pumjaton, similar to that of Pygmalion, king of Tyre, whose name may have been derived from the assimilation of the names of two deities: Pumay and Elyon. In some way, this king of Tyre appears also to be connected with Phoenician foundations in the west and, in one concrete case, with Carthage.

Yet again, historical figures, deities, heroes and myths are mingled in the origin of the colonies in the west, just as we have observed in Cadiz. In the North African case, a god-king (Pumai–Pygmalion) is indirectly responsible for the founding of Carthage in the year 814/813 BC, and his sister, Elissa, came to personify the island of Cyprus, so called in the eastern texts (Alashiya). In Melqart's sanctuary in Gadir, moreover, there existed the 'sacred olive of Pygmalion' which bore fruit in the form of emeralds.

So we see the god Pumai, coming from a Cypriot environment, being directly or indirectly linked with the Phoenician colonization of the west: the Nora stele, the founding of Carthage, the temple at Gadir. Furthermore, the chronology attributed to the Nora inscription fits into a period, the second half of the ninth century BC, in which a series of historical references come together and are sufficiently convincing to allow us to think that we are getting close to the real dates of the Phoenician diaspora to the west.

Indeed, it is the period in which King Ethbaal of Tyre founded the colony of Auza in Libya (*c.* 878–856 BC) (F. Josephus, *Ant. Iud.* 8:324) and that of the arrival of Tyrians in Kition (*c.* 850 BC), considered to be the starting point of Tyre's commercial expansion to the west. Lastly, it is the moment at which Timeus places the founding of Carthage (814/813 BC) and Thucydides that of the first commercial enclaves in Sicily.

In Nora, however, no traces of a Phoenician population have been verified before the seventh century BC. Consequently, we must ask ourselves whether, strictly speaking, an isolated inscription constitutes a solid argument in favour of a Phoenician presence in Sardinia during the ninth century BC. Again we find ourselves faced with a question of objectivity and method in reading the data. For the present, this is still an unconfirmed hypothesis.

On an epigraphic level, the monumental inscription at Nora has direct parallels in Cypriot and Phoenician inscriptions from the years 830–825 BC. But what is seldom said is that its parallels in the east

define a much broader chronological framework which even extends to the end of the eighth century BC. In other words, the chronology attributable to the Nora stele stretches from 830 to 730 BC. And that is without considering the possibility of archaisms in the graphic forms of the epigraph in the west.

As someone has rightly suggested, the Sardinian inscriptions will never be valid as long as they cannot be integrated into a broad context and therefore they should not affect our view of the chronology of Phoenician colonization in the west.

Other pre-colonial material in Italy and the Iberian Peninsula

It has recently been suggested that material traces of Phoenician colonial shipping activity (eleventh to tenth centuries) were to be found in Sicilian waters. Certain types of scarab, fibula and ceramic vessels from indigenous settlements at Cassabile, Syracuse, Caltagirone and Megara seemed to argue in favour of a relatively early oriental influence in the interior of the island. The hypothesis has still not been adequately tested and has been connected with the so-called Tartessian 'proto-orientalizing' of the ninth to eighth centuries BC.

Indeed, in the past few years various authors have again been defending the possibility of pre-colonization, basing their arguments on the prosperity of the Tartessian settlements at Huelva and Seville during the Final Bronze Age (ninth to eighth centuries BC). This prosperity would be the expression of an indigenous response to a very early stimulus from the east.

Within this 'proto-orientalizing' horizon, with no permanent colonial enclaves, certain material showing eastern influence, such as the painted pottery from El Carambolo (Seville), the elbow fibulae, the Estremaduran decorated stelae, the shields with a V-shaped armhole, a bronze bowl found at Berzocana (Cáceres) and a metal helmet from the Huelva estuary, must have a place.

The eastern influence in some of these pieces – pottery from El Carambolo, shields and decorated stelae – is more than dubious and still mere hypothesis. The rest of the material mentioned, as we shall see, poses problems of interpretation.

The piece thought to be the most ancient is the bowl from Berzocana, which has been related to Egyptian or Levantine workshops of the fourteenth to thirteenth centuries BC, although, in consideration of the dates for the founding of Gadir and Lixus, its

chronology has been brought forward to the twelfth to tenth centuries BC. The bronze helmet from the Huelva estuary, thought to have originated in Assyria or Ur in the ninth century BC, would confirm this early oriental influence.

Again we find ourselves faced with a few isolated items, although, in this case, deliberately removed from their cultural context, which is that of the Atlantic circulation of metals during the Final Bronze Age. In effect, both the bowl from Berzocana, found together with gold torques of an Atlantic type, and the bronzes deposited in the Huelva estuary, fall well within the so-called 'carp's tongue sword complex' (900–700 BC), a name by which the period of most intensive trade in metals of the Atlantic Final Bronze Age is known, very familiar to European prehistorians. At these dates, Atlantic Europe from Ireland to southwestern Andalusia formed an enormous market in which manufactured articles and ingots of gold, copper and tin were circulating on a grand scale. The most dynamic centres of metal distribution were Brittany, the Loire and Seine basins, the mouth of the Tagus and Huelva.

It is in this Atlantic environment that we must situate the stelae, helmets and shields characteristic of Final Bronze II (1050–900 BC). During the ninth to eighth centuries BC (Final Bronze III), the south of the Iberian Peninsula gradually formed a bridgehead between the Atlantic trade and the islands of Sardinia and Sicily.

Iberian metals found in Sardinia (Sa Idda) and Sicilian bronzes like the elbow fibula, located in the Iberian Peninsula, would circulate through this secondary Atlantic circuit. At the beginning of the eighth century BC this current, aimed at obtaining metals on a grand scale, which linked Portugal and Huelva with Sardinia, Sicily and Cyprus, reached its climax and coincided with the first real indications of a Phoenician population in the west, whose commercial strategy was very well able to interrupt, intervene in and make use of this existing trading circuit.

In conclusion, we can say that in the Tartessian area the first Phoenician influences were not felt until the eighth century BC, judging by the results obtained in recent excavations in the indigenous hinterland – Torre de Doña Blanca, Carambolo, Setefilla, Carmona, Acinipo, Cerro de los Infantes. On the basis of the present archaeological record, this invalidates the idea of 'proto-orientalizing' during the Final Bronze Age.

A critical review of the arguments normally used to support

Phoenician pre-colonization in the west obliges us to question a theoretical model based exclusively on a few isolated archaeological finds, assessed by means of traditional descriptive methods which do no more than establish comparisons and morphological parallels in terms of a distinctly dubious chronological framework – that of the classical sources.

None of the elements that might define the pre-colonization has a basis of rigorous and methodical checking against the archaeological context. Moreover, they all correspond to a model in current use, constructed on the grounds of recent Mycenaean finds in Italy. These have served as the basis for the hypothesis of a Greek pre-colonization in the west and it is on the basis of this model that they claim to explain Phoenician pre-colonization.

Insistence on reconciling the archaeological documentation with the written classical sources leads today, as in former years, up a blind alley, because of a narrowly empiricist attitude in which, rather than objectivity and methodological rigour, it is chronology, dating, morphological descriptions and the mere anarchic accumulation of artefacts in a vacuum that prevail. Simple analogical inference and pure inductivism lead to a pseudo-historical reading of the data which are at present decontextualized. In this framework, it must not be forgotten that the Phoenician question in the west is entirely dependent on the value we give to the very rich and complex archaeological evidence from the eighth to seventh centuries BC, relegating the accumulated myths and legends that accompany the first colonial foundations in the western Mediterranean to second place.

As far as the east is concerned, the roles are reversed, since nowadays it is the archaeological information and not the written texts that must help us interpret ancient settlements. In the last instance, it is this archaeological evidence above all that allows us to formulate hypotheses for a historical reconstruction of colonization.

8

The Phoenician colonies in the central Mediterranean

Analysis and interpretation of the most significant data concerning the main areas affected by Phoenician expansion during the eighth and seventh centuries BC will give us a frame of reference by which to differentiate groups, stages and even independent evolutionary processes in the west. During the initial development of Tyrian colonization in the Mediterranean, the evidence favours rather heterogeneous economic and commercial strategies in terms of different adaptations to a diversified set of economic, strategic and political circumstances; hence the interest for us in analysing the pattern of Phoenician settlement in its process of expansion, since it shows clearly the category and function of the individual colonies.

We shall start by discussing a group of colonies which share a common geographical and cultural proximity to Carthage, since that North African colony undoubtedly constituted the most important Phoenician establishment in the whole of the central Mediterranean. Its influence in political, economic and ideological matters was such that it eventually shaped a vast cultural area, formed by the Phoenician enclaves of Sardinia and Sicily (Fig. 46). In spite of having an identity of their own and enjoying autonomy in commercial and economic matters, these islands were very soon an integral part of the Carthaginian socio-political sphere, adopting an urban model similar to that of Carthage and so presenting from a very early stage certain cultural constants that we do not observe in the more westerly Phoenician settlements of Gadir, Ibiza, eastern Andalusia and Atlantic Morocco, and which are probably to be explained in terms of certain links of a very complex nature which they maintained with the North African metropolis.

The regional – or insular – divergences to be seen in this zone will disappear from the sixth century onward, when Carthage bursts on to the scene as a Mediterranean political power, in response first to the

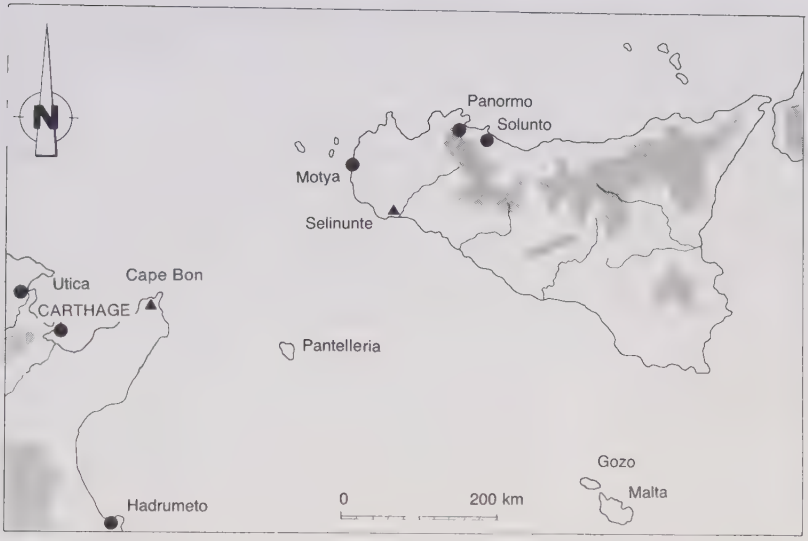


Fig. 46 The Phoenician colonies of the central Mediterranean

advance of Greek trade and later to the nascent power of Rome. The gradual process of political domination exercised by Carthage over the old Phoenician centres in the central Mediterranean will lead to the 'Punic' period, implying the cultural and political unification of the whole zone.

In order to grasp the differential features existing between the chief colonies in the west, we have resorted to analysing a series of variables which in our opinion seem to be the most significant when it comes to defining economic objectives and so reconstructing the historical process: the institutional or political background to the colonial foundation, the socio-ideological factors involved, topography and settlement patterns and the territory encompassed by the economic activity. For this we shall turn to the written references, when there are any, and use the data of the archaeological record which enable us to reconstruct the origin and stages of the process.

Starting from an initial hypothesis, we shall go on to compare it with the archaeological documentation: the group of Phoenician colonies set up in the central Mediterranean very soon adopted cultural and ideological features allied to the model established in Carthage. These features could be summed up in a single phrase: determination to stay in the west and consequently the early adoption of the status of

colonies, a status that would find expression in a series of manifestations such as the appearance of sanctuaries, sacred precincts, territorial conquest and, lastly, defensive systems.

All this enables us to differentiate this group from the more western block in which a smaller size of necropolis, the limited extent of the settlements, the presence of warehouses, the absence of sacred precincts and other elements seem to indicate, at least initially, a certain provisional or transitory aspect of the original Phoenician population. In this respect, the Phoenician 'colony' in Malta, a stopover and port of call for ships in the ancient period, is closer to the western model than to the group of Phoenician colonies in the central Mediterranean.

The choice of a few colonial settlements will enable us to focus the analysis on those sites where the historical or archaeological information is relevant, such as the colonies of Carthage, Motya and Sulcis. If we have opted for these three centres, it is because they seem to us significant in the context of the Phoenician expansion into the centre of the Mediterranean, since they allow the colonial model in the area to be defined in its three aspects: political, strategic and territorial. These criteria cannot be considered definitive, far from it, given the state of archaeological investigation in this field. Archaeology, indeed, may provide much that is new and surprising, obliging us to modify and give a new slant to what we expound here.

CARTHAGE, THE 'NEW CAPITAL'

Although we are barely starting to know the characteristics of the only recently identified early colony, both the story of the founding of Carthage in the year 814, in which the Tyrian royal family had a hand, and the number and category of the sanctuaries and necropolises in the early settlement make it clear that, from the beginning, Carthage was the authentic 'new capital' in the west. Contrary to what has long been asserted, namely that ancient Carthage differed hardly at all from other modest centres in the Mediterranean, the finds relating to the eighth to seventh centuries BC show that the new colony very swiftly attained the status of a genuine colonial city, endowed with certain institutions that other Phoenician settlements would be slow to adopt.

The archaeological record enables us to complete the fragmentary and subjective picture given by the classical historians. Besides, nothing has been preserved of the annals or historical writings of

Carthage so that we are dependent on written documentation which is the work of the North African city's principal enemies.

The story of the foundation and its socio-political background

Sceptics consider that any historical reference to Carthage that predates the fifth century BC is a myth, as, too, are the story of its foundation and the figure of Elissa–Dido. The names of some Carthaginian personages like Malco, which means 'king', also have little basis in history.

And yet there are too many coincidences between the eastern and the classical sources to allow us to think that the story of Elissa had no historical basis, unlike other myths invented at a later period such as those attributing the founding of Carthage to two personages, Azoros and Karchedon, which are none other than the Greek names for Tyre and Carthage respectively.

From the Annals of Tyre it appears that around the year 820 BC Mattan I left the throne of Tyre in the hands of his son Pygmalion, who was only eleven years old at the time. In the seventh year of his reign (814 BC), his sister Elissa had fled from Tyre and founded Carthage (Menander, in F. Josephus *C. Ap.* 1:125). The circumstances that gave rise to the founding of Carthage follow various chronological stages:

(1) Elissa or Elisha was married to her uncle Acherbas or Zakarbaal, high priest of Heracles (Melqart) and, as such, occupying the second position in rank after the king of Tyre. Thus, Acherbas was a powerful personage, rich and apparently a direct rival to the king. Indeed it is related that Mattan had sought to leave the throne to his two children but the people of Tyre had objected, choosing Pygmalion, who endeavoured to seize his brother-in-law's riches and ordered his assassination. His widow, Elissa, together with a group of Tyrians loyal to her husband, who were known as 'princes', fled secretly to Cyprus after paying homage to Melqart (Justinus 18:4. 3–9). The Tyrian diaspora was thus the immediate consequence of political tension in Tyre, which had brought a young monarch, supported by the people, face to face with part of the city aristocracy, led by the king's own uncle, Acherbas.

(2) Bitias, the commander of the Tyrian fleet (Virgil *Aen.* 1:738) and Barcas, the ancestor of the Barcidas (Sil. Italicus *Punica* 1:72–75) figured among the princes who accompanied Elissa in her flight.

The first stopping place in the expansion to the west was thus Cyprus. In Cyprus (Kition?), the party of Tyrian aristocrats was joined by the high priest of Juno (Astarte), who imposed the condition that, in the land they were going to colonize, the priesthood should be hereditary among the members of his own family (Justinus 18:4–6). In this way we see both the Tyrian aristocracy and the temple involved in founding Carthage. Before setting out, the Tyrians collected eighty young girls in Cyprus who were destined for sacred prostitution and to ensure the continuation of the Phoenician religion in the west.

(3) Elissa's expedition headed straight to the site of Carthage, where it received presents and greetings from the men of Utica (Justinus 18:5, 8–17). This happened during the seventh year of the reign of Pygmalion and thirty-eight years before the first Olympiad (Timeus, in Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. Rom.* 1:74, 1), which, as we have already seen, shows a very tight chronology: the years 814–813 BC.

(4) The colonists were well received by the indigenous Libyans, whose king, Hiarbas, gave them free entry into his territory: they were permitted to buy as much land as could be covered by an oxhide. The astute Elissa, whom the natives called Deido or Dido (the 'wandering one'), resorted to the stratagem of cutting the oxhide into very fine strips with which she was able to mark out the perimeter of the whole of the hill called Byrsa, where Carthage was sited. After that they founded the city and called it *Qart-hadasht,* or 'new city'. The most ancient name for the hill or acropolis at Carthage, Byrsa, is a Greek word meaning 'oxhide', which was probably assimilated by the Greeks on hearing the pronunciation of the Semitic word *brt*, which means 'fortified citadel' or 'fortress'.

(5) The native king demanded with threats to marry Elissa. Faithful to her husband, she threw herself on to a fire in order to escape this marriage. After this sacrifice by fire, her subjects deified her and preserved her cult until the last days of the history of Carthage.

In the story of the founding of Carthage, then, we find strong legendary elements and 'arrangements' typical of Greek and Hellenistic historiography, like the very name of Byrsa or the legend of the oxhide.

Nevertheless, Timeus and Flavius Josephus, who consulted eastern sources of information, agree on the date of the founding of Carthage. In reality there are no proofs that the dates are reliable, nor yet that they are a late invention.

Moreover, features can be found in the story that are clearly oriental, extraneous to the classical world and which could hardly have been invented by a Greco-Roman historian. Thus, for example, the names of the protagonists are totally Phoenician – Pygmalion (Pumayyaton), Elissa (Elisha or Alashiya) and Acherbas (Zakarbaal). Sacred prostitution and the hereditary nature of the priesthood are other Semitic traits. Lastly, the ritual of Elissa's self-immolation, totally foreign to the classical world, is well known in Phoenicia and Canaan.

Besides, the Tyrian origin of the city is confirmed by other, later, facts. Thus, after its foundation, Carthage sent an embassy annually to Tyre, charged with making offerings to the temple of Melqart (Quintus Curcius Rufus 4:2, 10). These offerings or tributes consisted of the tenth part of the profits made each year by the city (Diodorus 20:14). This yearly rent indicates that Carthage very soon restored its bonds with Tyre under circumstances unknown to us. It must not be forgotten that the founding of Carthage was to some extent an act of rupture, the colony being set up by political refugees who probably remained out of touch with the central Tyrian power during the first generations and were firmly determined to stay in the west. In this respect, it must be defined as a colony right from the outset.

Moreover, it can apparently be inferred from the story that there was a significant Cypriot embassy among the contingent of Tyrian people who accompanied Elissa. The high priest of Astarte, perhaps of the temple of Kition, joined the group of colonists and the very name of the protagonists suggests a component of Cypriot origin. It will be remembered that Elissa's name has a direct connection with the ancient name for the island of Cyprus (Alashiya) and that the name of the king of Tyre contains the Cypriot form of the god Pmy. Kition, then, might have been part of the founding institutions of Carthage and the names of the protagonists could have been created artificially to emphasize that mixed nature of the founding population of Carthage, personifying a social sector from Tyre and from the island of Cyprus.

In any case, from all that has been said it is important to retain certain data which seem significant as we embark on a critical discussion of the meaning of colonization:

(a) The founding of Carthage, taking place in a region already known to Tyre (Utica), is the consequence of a political crisis in the metropolis.
(b) On the institutional level, the origin of Carthage appears associated with families of the Tyrian aristocracy and the upper hierarchy of the religious institutions.
(c) The founding of the colony implicates the appropriation and marking out of a territory by dint of fortifying the inhabited area.
(d) The origin of the city is linked to a rite of human sacrifice in the form of immolation by fire.
(e) In every respect, Carthage was born with the rank of a Tyrian colony.

Ancient Carthage: palaeography and archaeology

Carthage was sited on a peninsula in the gulf of Tunis and at the centre of a strategic passage on the shipping routes through the central Mediterranean (see Fig. 46). Blessed with a highly fertile hinterland, the colony enjoyed an unsurpassed position for a port. The distribution and spatial organization of the main urban and religious elements of this colony conform to an ancient Phoenician settlement model which, in comparison with other Mediterranean centres, shows plainly a clear hierarchization amongst the Phoenician colonies, depending on different territorial, economic and social norms. For its category, ancient Carthage offers an obligatory reference point when it comes to differentiating forms and initial organization in the Phoenician colonies in the west.

Until a few years ago, all we knew of ancient Carthage was a number of necropolises, an enigmatic deposit of offerings – the so-called Cintas *chapelle* – and the *tophet*, situated at Salammbô. Until 1983 there were even doubts as to the exact location of the city, since no traces prior to 400 BC were known. The German excavations of 1983 and 1991 have finally put an end to the arguments that placed the location of the earliest settlement founded by Elissa indiscriminately at Le Kram, Marsa, Sidi Bou Said or on the hill of St Louis, now called Byrsa.

Various sondages, carried out by Rakob and Niemeyer at the foot of the hill of Byrsa and in particular in the sector of Septimius Severus Street, in the so-called Ben Ayed terrain and under the streets of the Roman city – *cardo* XVI, *cardo* XIII and *decumano maximo* – have shown that the ancient city was built on the southern slopes of Byrsa –

in the area of the Punic harbours and the *tophet* – and, in the eighth and seventh centuries, covered an area of some 55 ha, that is to say seven times bigger than the ancient city of Smyrna and just a little smaller than the Greek colony of Megara Hiblea in Sicily.

The conquest of the city by Scipio in 146 BC, whose armies razed the town to the ground, and the sackings by Augustus in 29 BC in order to raise the *Colonia Concordia Iulia Cartago*, must have removed some 100,000 m^3 of rubble and ruins that formed a layer of debris 3 to 10 m thick over the Punic city, as the French archaeologists were able to observe in several areas of Byrsa. The most ancient occupation levels, lying at a depth of more than 5 metres under the Roman city and only 1.7 metres above sea level, and directly over the sands of the beach, have yielded interesting traces of dwellings with walls of sun-dried brick, streets and wells, forming a structure of large isolated houses, separated by squares or gardens (Fig. 47). The archaeological evidence suggests that the earliest colony of the eighth to seventh centuries BC was surrounded by a kind of 'industrial belt' outside the walls, consisting of workshops and metalworkers' furnaces (especially in the south, close to the beach, and in the east), installations devoted to working the murex to obtain dye, and to potters' kilns. The arrangement of these workshop quarters in the south and east of the urban nucleus and the presence of an ancient necropolis in the area of the baths of Antoninus, to the north, mark the precise limits of ancient Carthage (Fig. 48).

The find of Greek late geometric ceramics in the first occupation levels at Carthage, including, interestingly for their antiquity, some proto-Corinthian *kotylai* of the type known as 'Aetos 666' and Euboean cups decorated with metopes (Fig. 49), dates the earliest built structures to 775–750 BC. Other imports, like Cypriot ceramics and a number of amphorae of an Andalusian type, show that eighth-century Carthage was a highly organized city, maintaining regular trading contacts with Greece, Pithecusas and the Phoenician colonies in southern Spain.

In some of the areas – under *cardo* XIII – beneath the earliest Phoenician strata, levels have been identified containing indigenous pottery belonging exclusively to the Final Bronze Age; these could, perhaps, correspond to an indigenous village that would have occupied the hill of Byrsa before the arrival of the Phoenicians.

From eighth- to sixth-century Carthage three great necropolises are known, so the volume of burials alone in the North African city exceeds the usual average in other western enclaves. This would argue in favour of a greater population density than in the rest of the

Fig. 47 Ancient levels of the eighth to seventh centuries BC at Carthage

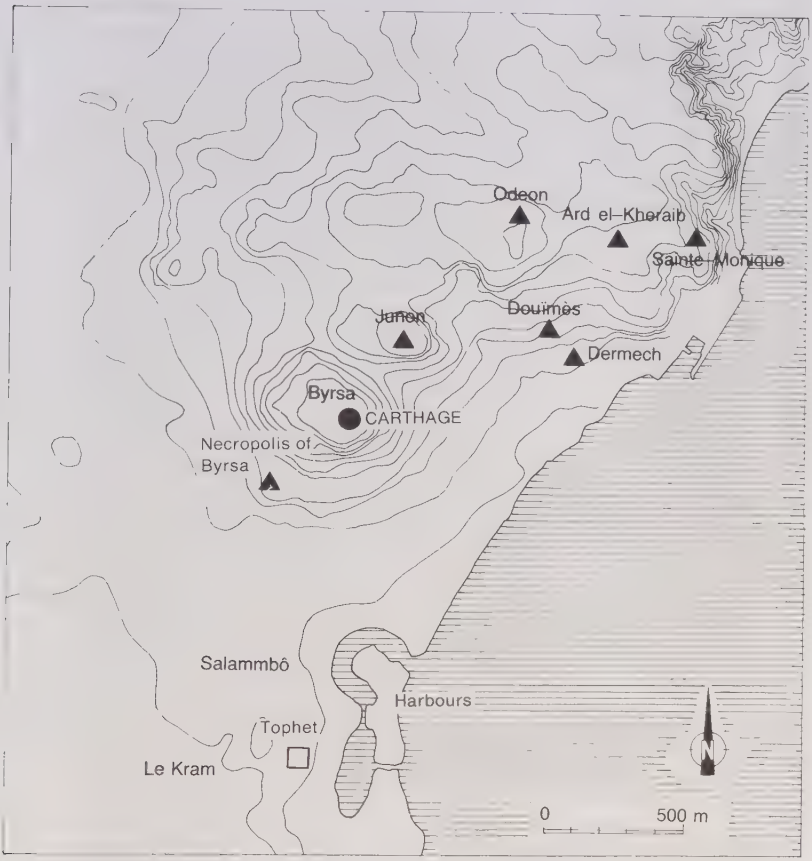


Fig. 48 Plan of Carthage

Phoenician colonies. The areas set aside for burials lie around the acropolis of Byrsa on the south, on the north (the necropolis of Junon) and on the northeast (the necropolis of Dermech-Douïmès); in all of them the inhumation rite predominated with the exception of Junon, where we find very early cremations (Fig. 50).

The Junon necropolis, thought to be the earliest in Carthage, came into use around 730–720 BC, while those of Byrsa and Dermech-Douïmès began to be used around 700–680 BC (Fig. 51). This would mean that Carthage had not been consolidated as a colony until the second half of the eighth century BC, when the urban space was being planned to meet the needs of a growing population.

The situation is similar with the *tophet* in Carthage, situated at Salammbô, to the south of Byrsa hill, reserved as a sacred precinct and

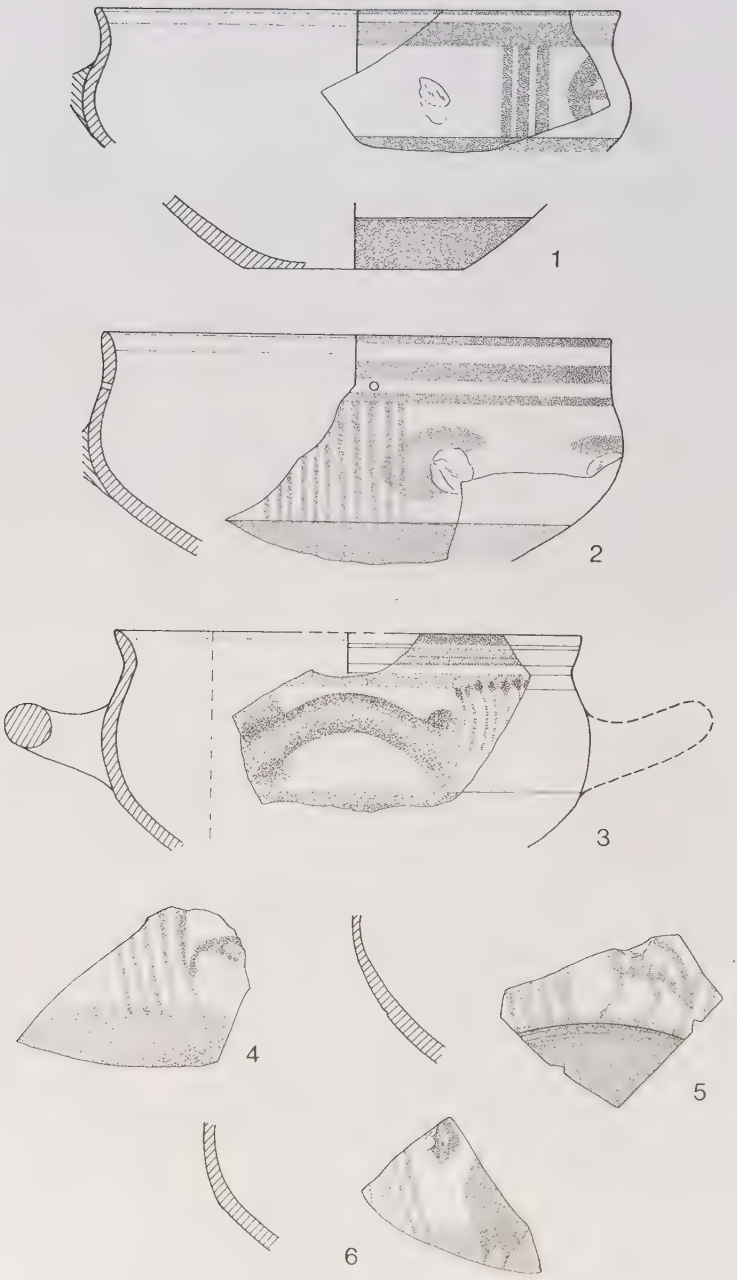


Fig. 49 Euboean pottery from Carthage

Fig. 50 Alabaster urn from the necropolis of Junon, Carthage (seventh century BC)

for infant cremations. The precinct was in uninterrupted use from the last quarter of the eighth century BC, judging by the chronology attributed to the earliest level of urn deposits – level Tanit I – from around 700 BC.

In short, we can say that the first burials in Carthaginian soil date from the years 730–700 BC, while the first traces of occupation of the hill of Byrsa fall before 750 BC. This leaves a gap in the archaeological

Fig. 51 Early Phoenician pottery from Carthage

information of roughly a little more than half a century, if we stick to the date for the founding of Carthage and the first traces of permanent use of the territory. A strange find made in the sanctuary of Salammbô, however, brings us closer to the historical time scale of the late ninth century BC. In 1947 under the first levels of urns in the *tophet* at Carthage, Cintas discovered a small enclosure or chamber, which was catalogued at the time as a deposit of foundation offerings, which contained among other things several pieces of Greek pottery, apparently deposited at two consecutive times (Fig. 52). This 'chapel' yielded

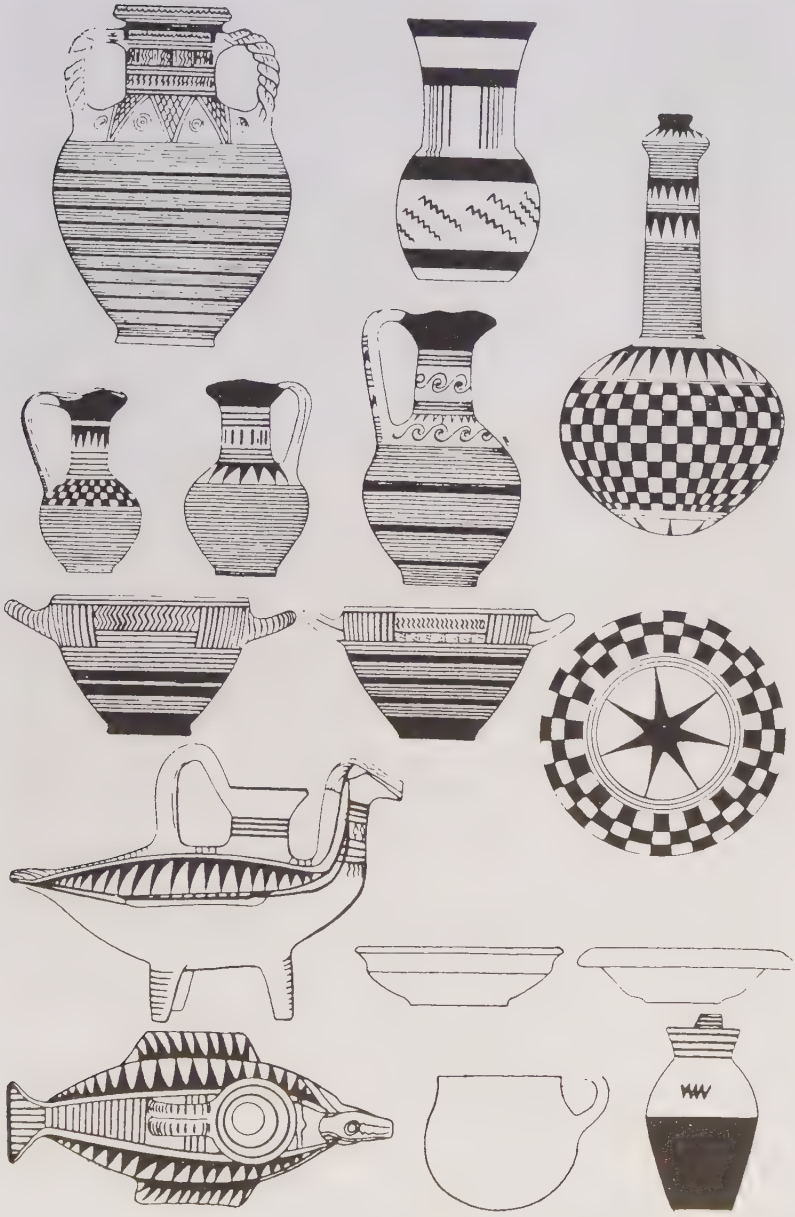


Fig. 52 Pottery from the deposit in the *tophet* at Carthage

Euboean–Cycladic and Corinthian pottery, possibly from the Euboean colony of Pithecusas (Ischia), now dated to between 760 and 680 BC. Together with Rakob's finds at the foot of Byrsa, these constitute, for the moment, the earliest known archaeological material from Carthage.

Despite the antiquity of the deposit at Salammbô, Carthage did not develop as an urban entity before the second half of the eighth century BC. It is from this period that the *tophet* begins to be used as a sacred place, with all its ideological and civic implications, which we shall examine later; also dating from the late eighth century BC is the organization of spaces for burials and the demarcation of the acropolis by means of fortifications. Although almost a century had passed since the foundation, the process of urban transformation in Carthage was still relatively rapid compared with other colonies in the west.

The first political initiatives

The first piece of historical information that we have after the foundation in 814/813 BC refers to activity abroad by Carthage, which took concrete form in the founding of the first colony or offshoot in Ibiza in the year 654/653 BC (Diodorus 5:16: 2–3). We know, however, that the island had been occupied previously by a Phoenician population.

Around the year 600 BC, Carthage was already in a position to confront the Phoceans of Massalia (Marseilles) at sea with the probable aim of preventing the founding of that Greek colony (Thucydides 1:13, 6). Around the year 550 BC, Carthage laid the foundations of her mastery of the sea, and the dynasty founded by Magon obtained political control of Sardinia and part of Sicily (Justinus 18:7) and confronted the Phocean squadron in the waters of Alalia (Corsica) (Herod. 1:166). Lastly, in the year 509, a treaty signed by Carthage and Rome sanctioned for the first time in the west an allocation of areas of political influence (Polybius 3:23). Carthage consolidated her hegemony at sea and embarked on the road that would convert her inevitably into a naval and military power.

This would all have been unimaginable had not considerable demographic, economic and urban growth taken place in Carthage between the years 730 and 600 BC, that is, in the period in which other Tyrian foundations in the west had not yet progressed beyond the rank of ports of call or trading posts. It is estimated that at its period of greatest political and commercial expansion Carthage could shelter some

200,000 inhabitants. This fact has led some authors to think that Carthage was the only Tyrian colony in the western Mediterranean. In the Greek sense, Carthage is the only Phoenician foundation to meet the criteria of a genuine city.

Both the story of its foundation and onomastic and epigraphic evidence indicate that the 'new Tyre' played a key role from the start in welding together a few commercial interests over a vast geographical radius. Rather than reflecting a colonial, peripheral and retarded environment relative to a metropolis, Carthage from the outset developed its own, almost 'Punic' socio-cultural dynamic, which finds expression in a series of cultural and ideological traits that are missing in the east, like its militarism and the *tophet*. In the matter of industrial production, even the early pottery of Carthage has unique features.

The rapid growth of the North African colony can only be explained by the emergence after the founding of Qart-hadasht of a strong determination to create a genuine 'new capital' in the west, destined later to watch over the interests of Tyre and to take over from her in the sixth century, after the metropolis fell into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. Significantly, the inhabitants of Carthage always considered themselves *bn Ṣr*, sons of Tyre, or *ḥ ṣry*, Tyrians, as can be deduced from their epigraphs.

If, during the first hundred years of its life, Carthage probably differed little from other early settlements in the west, from the second half of the eighth century BC onward the change that occurred is both qualitative and quantitative. Three alternative hypotheses become entangled around the subject: causes of a commercial, a social or a political type.

For some, the economic growth of Carthage is due to its position as an obligatory port of call for ships from Gadir carrying wealth to Tyre. And yet archaeological proofs of regular contact between Carthage and Gadir in the early period are scarce.

Another argument that stands out as a factor behind the power of Carthage is the different social origins of the Phoenician population in the west. In Carthage, the social structure reveals marked imbalances between a sector linked with the foundress, Elissa, and another sector composed of colonists and people who arrived in North Africa seeking their fortune. These differences would have favoured a rapid transition to urban and state institutions. Lastly, the possibility must be considered that, from the outset, Carthage was founded in obedience to different political objectives from those of other Phoenician enclaves

which were created originally for a very different function: that of staging posts or harbours. Carthage would correspond to a new type of Phoenician foundation, intended as a refuge for fugitives from Tyre and Cyprus and above all as an obstruction to the advance of Greek trade in the west. This would explain, among other things, the foundation in Ibiza, which closed the passage to the Straits of Gibraltar to any enemy ship coming from the Mediterranean. And it is precisely the Greek threat that would have provided the impetus to develop a military policy, to the detriment of strictly commercial aims, and to lay the foundations of the Carthaginian naval empire. It would have accelerated the transition of Carthage to a great urban centre outside the control of Tyre. In other words, Carthage owed her growth to defensive and political rather than to commercial criteria.

All the same, we should point out that the threat of Greek trade was not felt in the west before the Phoceans founded Massalia and Ampurias. The Greeks who came into the Mediterranean before that, the Euboeans, far from being commercial competitors were the best trading partners of the western Phoenicians. Consequently, the change that took place in Carthage at the end of the eighth century was a response to other than strictly strategic, social or political causes. Analysis of the process in the remaining Phoenician centres in the Mediterranean will tell us if it was an isolated case or if, on the other hand, we are looking at a more widespread development.

Economic activity

We have little information about the economy of Carthage before the sixth century BC. But there is no reason to suppose that its economic activity was not governed by strategic and territorial factors.

The early settlement, situated on a hill, no doubt dominated rich agricultural plains which, to judge by the data, constituted one of the pillars of Carthaginian prosperity. Two great cereal-growing regions – the central area of the territory, and the hinterland of Carthage and the valley of the river Bagradas, dominated at its mouth by Utica – were still producing grain in abundance in the Roman period. In the environs of Carthage and the Cape Bon area there were fields full of crops (Diodorus 20:8, 3–4) and Carthage developed sophisticated and well-organized systems of agricultural practice to which even Rome acknowledged herself indebted.

An idea of the importance given to agriculture in Carthage can be

obtained from the celebrated Carthaginian treatises on agronomy. The most famous of all, the treatise of Magon, constituted a compendium of knowledge of such scope that the Roman senate elected to translate it into Greek and Latin (Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, 18:22). It was edited around the fifth century BC and gave instructions for growing cereals, vines and olives, which suggests plenty of experience in these techniques in North Africa.

Carthage filled North Africa with olives and succeeded in producing tons of oil for local use and for export. Cultivated fields covered the environs of the city and were worked by slave labour. The rearing of cattle, goats and horses was left to the native Libyans of the interior (Polybius 12, 3:3–4).

The most powerful citizens of Carthage had extensive lands and farms in which slaves and prisoners of war from the period of the Punic wars worked (Diodorus 20:13, 2; 20:69, 5; Appian *Pun.* 15). References to wealthy Carthaginians owning vines, olives, orchards and pastures and to a very powerful nobility are numerous. Beyond this fertile zone close to Carthage stretched the fields cultivated by the Libyans who kept ownership of their land in exchange for heavy tributes and for supplying a large percentage of grain to the city (Livy 31:48, 1; Justinus 31:3; Diodorus 20:8, 3–4).

Strictly speaking, then, we must envisage a peripheral territory in Carthage that was devoted to producing food for the urban population and was the property of eminent citizens from at least the sixth century BC. We do not know if the state kept part of the agricultural land, that is to say the *chora*, for itself. In reality the available documentation supports the existence of private rather than public ownership of land, in the hands of nobles and landowners. Perhaps the state confined itself to planning and legislating for agricultural activity, or else this minimal intervention by the public institutions should be seen as a consequence of total assimilation between the state and the landowning nobility, who were probably one and the same.

Judging by epigraphic evidence, the Carthaginian upper classes – the *b'lm* or lords and princes – were made up of landowners and great shipowners, administrative officers, judges and priests, who, strictly speaking, formed an oligarchy on which political, administrative and religious power was dependent. Below this oligarchy came the *mkr* or *shr*, traders and merchants, and also one or two commercial agents or *mhsbm*.

Nevertheless it should not be forgotten that all these economic data

refer to Punic Carthage, that is to the sixth and fifth centuries BC. There are no known indications that Carthage controlled the agricultural hinterland during the eighth to seventh centuries BC. Previously, on the contrary, the Carthaginian economy was restricted in principle to exploiting a limited territory and the city paid an annual royalty to the Libyans in return for working the land ceded to Elissa. This tribute went on until the sixth to fifth centuries BC (Justinus 17:5, 14; 19:2, 4).

Nor did the systematic occupation of the coast begin until the sixth to fifth centuries BC, the time when Carthage seized military control of the territory through the building of imposing fortifications on the Gulf of Tunis and Cape Bon, like Ras Fortas, Kelibia and Ras el-Drek.

Utica

This Phoenician colony, considered to be older than Carthage, was situated 40 km to the northwest of the capital. From its position on a hill or small island, Utica controlled the mouth of the Bagradas and its fertile alluvial plains.

Of the ancient Phoenician colony we know only its two necropolises, that of Ile (seventh to sixth centuries BC) and that of La Berge (seventh to fifth centuries BC). The most interesting fact to bear in mind regarding these necropolises, which so far have not furnished any material earlier than the eighth century BC, is their monumental funerary architecture, which is a reflection of a sophisticated and opulent Phoenician society, grown rich on maritime trade, to judge by the imports found in their tombs. In addition, this is a style of funerary architecture that is closer to that of the western centres (such as Trayamar, in Malaga) than to that of Carthage.

As in Carthage, the ancient colony of Utica does not appear to have developed any outstanding agricultural activity at first, nor to have started an immediate process of controlling the surrounding territory. Moreover, in the sixth century BC there is still no mention of Utica alongside Carthage in the most outstanding political events of the day, such as the battle of Alalia. This suggests that until 540 BC Utica was still maintaining political and economic autonomy in relation to its powerful Carthaginian neighbour.

In spite of the scant documentation at our disposal about Phoenician Utica, there are three features we should remember here: its position on the mouth of a river, its ancient funerary architecture and, lastly, the absence of a *tophet* in the place, three features that

place Utica close to the group of western colonies, rather than to the focal point of Carthage.

Motya: a model of the strategic enclave in Sicily

The geographic situation of the island of Sicily confers an undeniable strategic value on its colonies. It was not an idle choice by the Phoenicians of an island which, because of its situation, had been vital to Mediterranean and Aegean shipping during the second millennium, a fact to which the Mycenean pottery found on its shores bears witness. Consequently we must assume that the settling of Phoenicians in Sicily was initially a response to certain basically strategic imperatives.

With the arrival of the Greeks on the island, the Phoenicians, who were already occupying coastal promontories and islets, found themselves obliged to withdraw to the western part, where they founded their three main colonies, Motya, Panormo and Solunto, of which Motya was undoubtedly the most important (Thucydides 6:2, 6; Diodorus 20:58, 2; 51,1). Given that the foundation of the first Greek colonies in Sicily – Naxos and Syracuse – dates from the years 734–733 BC, we must situate the withdrawal at the end of the eighth century BC. This second phase of Phoenician expansion in Sicily is the only one documented archaeologically.

We have hardly any information about the Phoenician staging posts at Panormo and Solunto. With Motya, or Mozia, situated on an island facing the mainland city of Marsala (Fig. 53), quite the opposite is true. Thus the Phoenician establishment is in line with a typically Phoenician settlement pattern: an island site, close to the coast and well protected from winds and tides, a pattern we see repeated at Gadir and Cerro del Villar in the Guadalhorce. We have here a settlement model quite clearly derived from the country of origin, where we already know the classic examples of Arvad and Tyre itself.

In Motya, the Phoenicians enjoyed a twofold geographical advantage: their alliance with the Elimians of western Sicily and the proximity to Carthage, on the other side of the Sicilian straits (Thucyd. 6:2, 6).

The fact that it was occupied without interruption from the end of the eighth to the fourth century BC makes Motya one of the best-known Phoenician nuclei and one of the few in which it has been possible to analyse the whole Phoenicio-Punic cultural sequence.

Fig. 53 Plan of the island of Motya

Consequently it provides a model of Phoenician settlement and must be considered as representative of the central group in the Mediterranean, since its urban topography and the spatial distribution of its most significant finds are relatively well known.

The Motya site, some 40 hectares in area, has a walled perimeter of 2500 m. Until 650 BC, the area assigned to dwellings was relatively small, as was the resident population to judge by the volume of burials in the necropolis. However, from the middle of the seventh century BC on, the funerary data indicate a considerable increase in population, with a maximum in the sixth century BC, when it was estimated at some 15,800 inhabitants.

The ancient necropolis began to be used at the end of the eighth century BC and is the archaeological complex that has yielded the earliest material so far. The grave goods indicate that we are dealing with

an eastern society in its main cultural manifestations and a relatively egalitarian one.

From the seventh century BC onward, the Phoenicians in Motya established a number of mercantile and harbour installations round the periphery of the island. Thus for example, in the northern zone and around the South Gate, large industrial complexes and warehouses in use during the seventh to sixth centuries BC suggest the early appearance of specialized industries – iron and purple – in the vicinity of the gates in the wall and of the wharves.

In the seventh century BC the Phoenicians erected two major sacred precincts in Motya. One of them, 'Cappidazzu', in the northeast of the island, was a rudimentary temple at first and later acquired almost monumental proportions. The other, in the north, was the *tophet* where urns containing the remains of cremated children were deposited throughout the history of the colony. The *tophet* began functioning during the first half of the seventh century BC and reveals a marked increase in burials from 650 BC on.

Motya was consolidated as an urban centre during the sixth century BC, when public buildings on a considerable scale were constructed: the walls, the temenos of the sanctuary of Cappidazzu, an enclosed harbour or *cothon* to the south and a mole at the North Gate, linking Motya with Birgi over in Sicily. This is the period, moreover, when centres like Motya came to depend progressively on Carthage.

To sum up, we can detect in Motya three clearly differentiated stages of development in the Phoenician population: an initial stage (end of the eighth century BC), corresponding to the arrival of a contingent of Phoenician population; a second stage (seventh century BC), in which the Phoenician settlement experienced notable growth and acquired industrial and mercantile installations, as well as precincts intended for worship and ritual activities; and a third stage (sixth century BC), coinciding with great public works worthy of a genuine urban centre.

To judge by the finds on the mainland, it seems unlikely that Motya fostered a policy of territorial expansion into the interior of Sicily in the early period. It was prevented by the presence of sizeable nuclei of indigenous population at Eryx and Segesta, which dominated a territory extremely rich in agricultural resources, with which the Phoenician colony maintained intense political and commercial relations over a long period. Furthermore, in Motya during the Phoenician stage, we do not find the features traditionally attributed

to an urban colony, such as defensive structures, religious, civil and administrative institutions, division into classes or a specialized community. Nor are major public buildings known before the sixth century, nor a central temple dominating the harbour, as in Kition and Sarepta.

However, the construction of a sacred area in the Cappidazzu and of a *tophet* in the first half of the seventh century BC is indicative of a qualitative change in the civic bodies of the Phoenician settlement, which seem for the first time to weld together the religious activities of the community. The population increase observed around 650 BC and the process of centralization of religious and ritual activity would, in the opinion of some authors, be an expression of the transition from a Phoenician merchant port to an urban colony in the style of those of Magna Graecia.

Panormo, Solunto and Malta

The Phoenician enclaves of Panormo and Solunto, situated on the island of Sicily, have not so far yielded any information on a par with that from neighbouring Motya.

All we know of Phoenician Panormo (the modern Palermo) are its necropolises, in use from the seventh century BC on. It seems that Panormo was a rich and opulent city under the sway of Carthage (eighth to sixth centuries BC), when a surge in population and building is recorded.

As for Phoenician Solunto, we still do not know its ancient site.

The small island of Malta, like Gozo and Pantelleria, was also considered to be a Phoenician colony, destined to serve as a refuge or port of call on voyages to the west, because of its position and excellent natural harbours (Diodorus 5:12, 3–4).

Although there are still no traces of permanent Phoenician enclaves, it is thought that the main centre in Malta could have been sited at Melita, the modern Medina-Rabat on the coast. The Phoenician occupation of the island, or rather of several of its strong points, dates from the second half of the eighth century. There is evidence of the presence of Phoenicians in the Rabat region from the end of the eighth century BC, but they did not coalesce into great agglomerations in the style of Tunisia, Sicily or Sardinia. Malta is thus distanced from the settlement pattern defined in Carthage or Motya, which shows a marked tendency towards concentrating the population spatially. Malta, on the

contrary, shows a scattered and limited population, as can be deduced from the distribution and volume of Phoenician tombs. This is a very peculiar case inasmuch as the indigenous population of Malta was very dense and developed, which made for an irregular and, apparently, transient colonial settlement pattern.

In spite of known graves from the late eighth century BC, the majority of the Phoenician burials correspond to the seventh century BC and are located in the interior and the west of the island, significantly the areas most populated by indigenous groups: Mtarfa, Rabat, Dingli. We should point out in this regard that the Phoenician pottery from Malta is morphologically more closely related to that of the more western centres – Andalusia, Oran, Lixus, Mogador – than to that of the central Mediterranean. A possible causal factor might be a separate origin for the Phoenician population in the west.

Undoubtedly the most important site in Malta is the sanctuary of Tas Silg, providing an opportunity to analyse the process of integration of the Phoenician colonists into the indigenous communities. This is a sacred precinct used jointly by the Final Bronze Age indigenous population and the Phoenicians, who dedicated it to Astarte during the seventh century. All this lends weight to the view that Malta was used on the part of the Phoenicians as a support and transit base for shipping rather than as a colonial settlement. Still considered as a secondary station on the Phoenician routes to the west, the island nevertheless constituted an obligatory port of call for Phoenician commercial traffic in the central Mediterranean.

The influence of Carthage in Malta is slight. For reasons unknown to us, the island lost its strategic function during the Punic phase and remained on the margin of the main circuits in the Mediterranean until the conquest by Rome at the end of the third century BC.

As for the islands of Gozo and Pantelleria, the archaeological evidence still shows no traces before the fifth century BC.

THE PHOENICIANS IN SARDINIA

The Phoenician establishment on the island of Sardinia shows settlement on very similar lines to the ones recorded in eastern Andalusia: systematic occupation of a coastal stretch and the creation of ports with very little distance between them (Fig. 54). Moreover, the Sardinian colonies follow a well-defined settlement pattern: the early enclave is generally located on a promontory lying on a headland

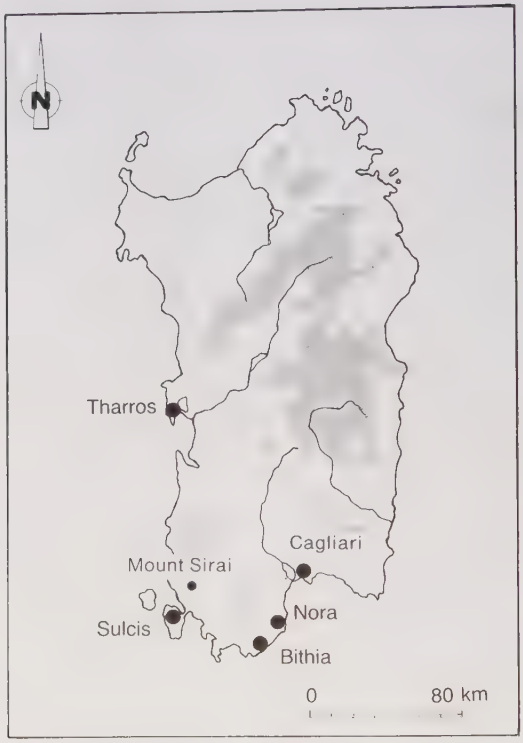


Fig. 54 The Phoenician colonies in Sardinia

joined to the mainland by a narrow isthmus (Fig. 55). The extraordinary concentration of Phoenician establishments on the southwest coast of the island from Cagliari to Tharros is comparable in the eighth to seventh centuries BC only with that along the coast of Malaga, Granada and Almería. However, in Sardinia this phenomenon is the outcome of a genuine territorial strategy, that of controlling the hinterland.

On the east coast of Sardinia, between Cape Carbonara in the south and Olbia in the north, the presence is documented of small Punic settlements, much more modest than the great centres on the southwest coast of the island, which have many features in common with those on the Spanish Costa del Sol. They were established at the end of the sixth century and are sited on small promontories in creeks dominating a lagoon and at the mouth of the rivers Picocca, Flumendosa and Quirra. The best known is the one at Cuccureddus, an early establish-

Fig. 55 View of the Phoenician colony of Bithia and its bay

ment from the seventh century, founded on a promontory dominating the mouth of the river Foxi. Following the Carthaginian conquest of the island in the second half of the sixth century, the settlement was destroyed and replaced by its neighbour, Cagliari, in the exercise of authority over the southeastern territory of the island.

Sulcis and its territorial strategy

Of all the Phoenician establishments in Sardinia, it is the one at Sulcis that yields the most information concerning the context of an early Phoenician settlement. The enclave at Sulcis is situated on an islet close to the cape of Sant' Antioco, which today is joined to the mainland by an isthmus resulting from the accumulation of sediments washed down by the river Palmas; it used to dominate an excellent sheltered natural harbour and apparently possessed a fortified enclosure and an extensive necropolis on the slopes of the Monte de Cresia (Fig. 56). To the north of the settlement and outside the defensive enclosure is the site of the *tophet* which has yielded the earliest traces known so far of the Phoenician presence in Sardinia (Fig. 57). Insofar as the *tophet* is deemed to be an urban feature, as we shall see later, and usually appears in the west at a stage that comes later than the

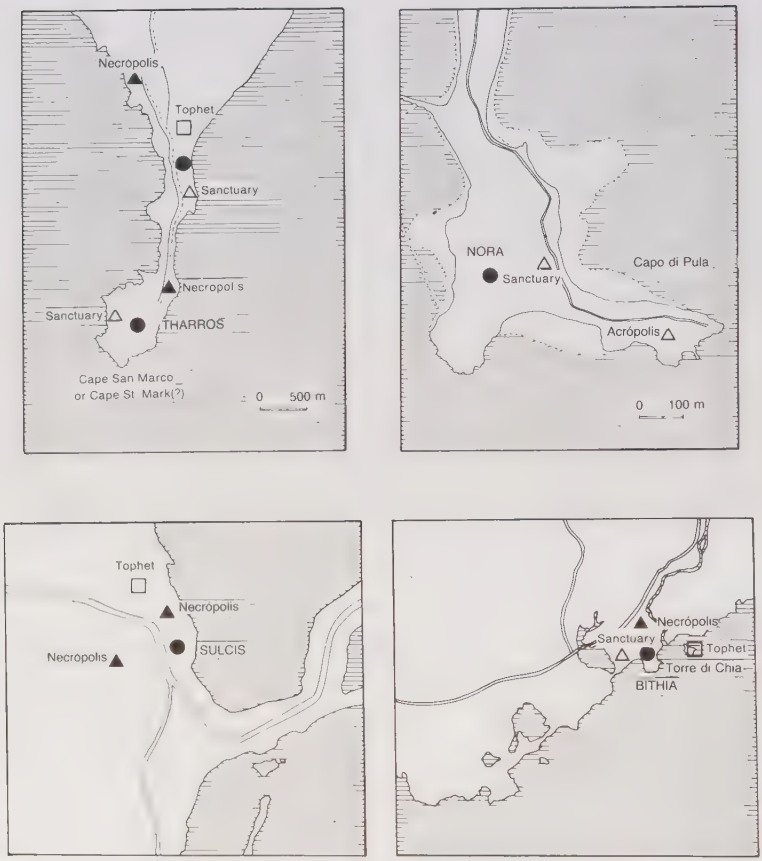


Fig. 56 Plans of Tharros, Nora, Sulcis and Bithia

founding of a Phoenician colonial enclave, we must place the origin of Sulcis in the middle of the eighth century BC, if not earlier.

This is confirmed by recent finds in the heart of the town of Sant' Antioco, in the district of Cronicario, where, in 1986, traces were found of the ancient Phoenician settlement (750–670 BC), founded in all probability in uninhabited territory (Fig. 58). As at Carthage, in the earliest levels at Sulcis the presence of Euboean ceramics denotes the importance of the island of Pithecusas in the first phase of the Phoenician and Euboean Greek diaspora towards the west.

From the seventh century onward, Sulcis created an extensive network of fortified installations, aimed at ensuring direct territorial

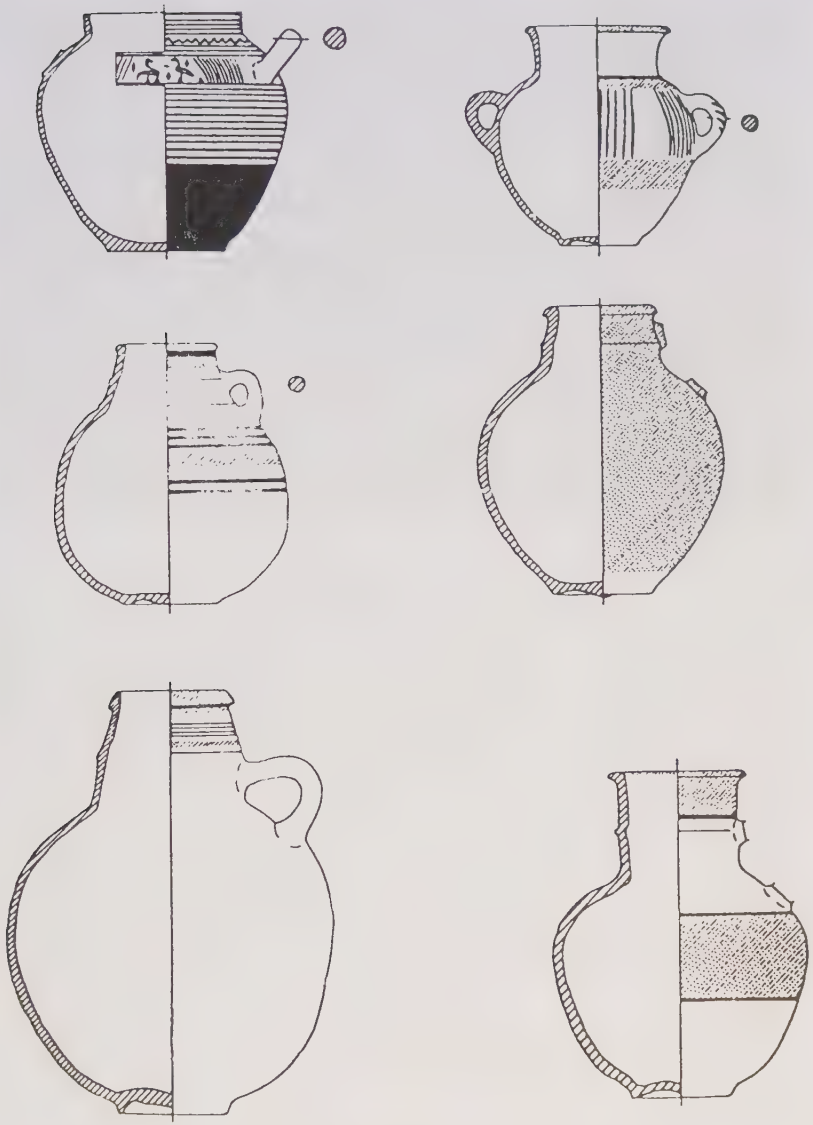


Fig. 57 Early pottery from the *tophet* at Sulcis

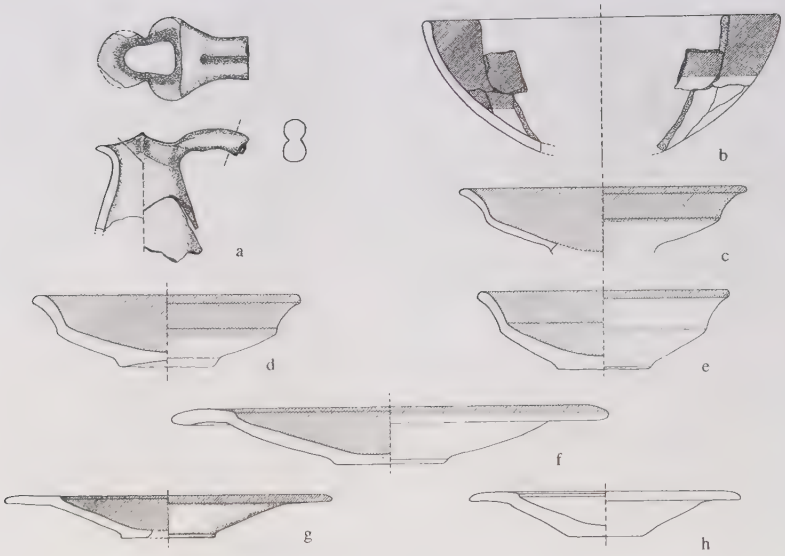


Fig. 58 Pottery from the Cronicario at Sulcis

control of a hinterland rich in lead and silver. Outstandingly important amongst all these fortifications marking out a vast defensive belt behind the Phoenician colony were those of Monte Sirai, Pani Loriga (Santadi), Monte Crobu, Corona Arrubia, Sa Turrita de Seruci and Porto Pino.

The best-known fortification is the one on Monte Sirai, built on top of a destroyed or abandoned village (*nuragha*) (Fig. 59). This military installation model, superimposed on a nuraghic village, suggests, rather than a phenomenon of deliberate destruction, a determination on the part of Sulcis to show its territorial sovereignty in regions previously dominated by an indigenous population.

In spite of everything, the military enclave of Monte Sirai seems to have maintained peaceful relations from the start with the natives of the interior, since there are no traces of belligerency. An early cremation necropolis (seventh to sixth centuries BC) in the vicinity of the fortress shows that the Phoenician population, drawn from Sulcis and perhaps formed by military personnel and soldiers, was considerable.

But the *tophet* of Monte Sirai was not built until the fourth century BC. This fact is significant because the establishment of this type of sacred enclosure always reflects the urban character of the corre-

Fig. 59 The acropolis of Monte Sirai

sponding centre. In other words, it means that Monte Sirai was an offshoot of Sulcis until the Hellenistic period, when it won independence from the overlordship of Sulcis and acquired an autonomous urban identity. Until then the *tophet* in Sulcis acted as a central urban sanctuary for all the rural and military communities of the interior.

The archaeology of Sulcis and the territory under its influence shows us, then, that the founding of the Phoenician colony in the eighth century BC was a genuinely strategic operation directed firstly towards ensuring control of a vast inland territory and then to defending it.

Sulcis is important insofar as it bears witness to the complex and heterogeneous nature of the objectives of Phoenician expansion in the west. In this case, the founding of the colony led to a need to bring the coast and the coastal valleys swiftly under its sway, that is, to establish economic and territorial autonomy in relation to the interior and to guarantee peaceful exploitation of the agricultural land and metal deposits.

Nora, Bithia and Tharros

We must omit Cagliari from the Phoenician establishments in Sardinia because of insufficient archaeological information concerning the early period.

As for Nora, its famous monumental inscription (see Fig. 45) seems

to suggest that the arrival of the Phoenicians coincided with the building of a temple to Pumay. It also states the tradition that Nora was the earliest Phoenician foundation in Sardinia. However, so far not a single archaeological trace earlier than the seventh century is known.

Ancient Nora was situated on the Capo di Pula, right on the gulf of Cagliari and 30 km distant from that city. The settlement, perched on the cape itself, was separated from the mainland by an isthmus to the north, on which stood the precinct of the *tophet* (see Fig. 56). The corresponding necropolis was situated on the mainland. Only in the sixth to fifth centuries BC was the city fortified and a temple built dominating the colony and the harbours, which provides a parallel with what has been observed at Motya.

Judging by the archaeological record, Nora does not seem to have developed a strategy of expansion into the interior in the early period, nor are there any traces of control of the hinterland, so characteristic elsewhere of the Phoenician centres in Sardinia.

Phoenician Bitia or Bithia was situated at the top of the promontory of Torre di Chia, beside the mouth of the river Chia and dominating two inlets suitable as natural harbours (see Fig. 55). The archaeological evidence suggests that the Phoenician settlement was founded at the end of the eighth century BC and that it experienced rapid growth throughout the seventh and sixth centuries BC.

The early necropolis was situated to the north of the Chia promontory, on the mainland, following a model identical to the one we have seen in Nora. As in Sicily and the rest of the Phoenician enclaves in Sardinia, the characteristic funeral rite was cremation which, in the Punic period, was replaced by inhumation. The *tophet* of Bithia lay on the island of Su Cardulinu, to the northeast of the settlement.

As in Sulcis and Bithia, in Tharros too the presence of Phoenicians from the eighth century BC has been verified (see Fig. 56). Its topography also follows the usual settlement pattern in Sardinia: the early enclave is located on a cape, the Cape of San Marco, joined to the mainland by an isthmus. The village lies right on the isthmus, to the east of the Torre di San Giovanni, and the corresponding necropolis lies to the south of the inhabited area and northeast of the cape at Punta Gabizza. In the Punic period, two other necropolises were set up, one in San Giovanni di Sinis, in the north, and the other in the far south of the settlement. Some early material from the San Giovanni necropolis suggests the possibility that two necropolises were in existence in Tharros from the end of the seventh century.

As in other Phoenician colonies, the *tophet* is situated on the periphery, to the north of the urban nucleus and close to the walls of the city. The elements characteristic of an urban centre consist not only of the *tophet* but also of a central sanctuary or templet, built in the eastern part of the Cape of San Marco in the early period. Consequently Tharros attained urban status, or at least equipped itself with civic institutions, very quickly and perhaps as early as Sulcis.

There are no proofs, however, that Tharros exercised territorial sovereignty in the manner of Sulcis during the eighth to sixth centuries BC, although it seems likely that it very soon took control of the fertile agricultural valleys of the plain of Sinis. On the other hand, there is clear evidence that it was a very active colony in the commercial sphere and that it developed a specialized production of luxury and gold articles for the rich Etruscan and Latin customers of mainland Italy.

Following the Carthaginian military intervention in all these territories in the middle of the sixth century BC, we observe for the first time in Sardinia an intensive exploitation of iron ore and a systematic occupation of all the agricultural regions of the interior of the island.

The Euboean connection

It is the general opinion that the massive arrival of the Greek element in the west was prejudicial in the long run to Phoenician trading interests in the Mediterranean, which meant that the Phoenicians found themselves obliged to change their strategy in the matter of exchanges and spheres of influence. There is also often talk of opposing interests, struggles for control of markets and an allocation of areas of competence and power. And yet the evidence seems to contradict this hypothesis of competitive spheres during the period of Phoenician expansion.

The earliest Greek colony in the west is Pitecusas or Pithecoussai (Ischia), founded by the Euboeans in the year 760 BC and consequently contemporary with the first Phoenician presence attested by the archaeological record: Carthage, the east coast of Andalusia and perhaps Sulcis. The settling of Phoenicians in western Sicily consequently comes after the settling of Greeks in Ischia and Cumas (around 750 BC).

As will be remembered, the absolute chronology of the Phoenician diaspora to the west was established mainly on the basis of Euboean–Cycladic pottery imports of Pitecusan origin, reflecting, among other

things, an exchange of products between Ischia, Carthage and Sulcis at the dawn of Tyrian expansion. On the strength of these imports in the central Mediterranean ambit, the Phoenician foundations of Carthage and Sardinia seem to pre-date those of Sicily and Malta.

The earliest pieces of late geometric Greek pottery from the *tophet* in Carthage (around 760 BC) are identical with the ones we find in the earliest horizon of the colony of Pitecusas and it was undoubtedly that Greek colony or its offshoot, Cumas, that channelled these products to the Phoenician colonial establishments. Some of these pieces, indeed, were produced by a Pitecusan workshop, as is the case of the Euboean urn from the *tophet* at Sulcis and an imitation proto-Corinthian vase found in a Phoenician tomb at Almuñécar, from the mid-seventh century BC.

Phoenician ceramics and inscriptions have, in turn, been found in Ischia, which suggests the presence of Semitic craftsmen or traders in the Greek colony at the end of the eighth century BC. What is more, the find of an occasional metal fibula in Pitecusas, combined with certain shapes of imported Phoenician pottery, gives a glimpse of the existence of direct contacts between the Greek colony and southern Spain at the end of the eighth century BC. In any case, Phoenician expansion towards the west seems to be connected in some way with Euboean activity and there may well have been common interests and enterprises, at least in the years 760–700 BC.

This symbiosis between the Phoenician and the Euboean is no novelty to us since we had already noticed a similar phenomenon in the eastern Mediterranean. Indeed, at the end of the ninth century BC Phoenicians and Euboeans were developing joint trading activities in Al Mina and Tell Sukas.

Because of all this, it is difficult to see Euboean colonization in the west as a competitive undertaking, prejudicial to Phoenician trade. In both enterprises certain common features are noticeable, such as the quest for metals, the same settlement pattern (coastal promontories and small islands), piracy, and probably a certain private component from the start. What is more, the economic objectives, far from being conflicting, are complementary. Thus the main interests of the Greeks of Pitecusas and Cumas are centred on exploiting and acquiring tin, copper and iron ore from Tyrrhenian Etruria, whereas the initial objective of the Phoenician diaspora appears to have been directed towards Atlantic metals.

Like many Phoenician enclaves in the west, the colony of Pitecusas

did not take long to become an industrial centre, devoted to working silver – coming, perhaps, from Gadir – and smelting and working iron, obtained from the island of Elba.

THE *TOPHET*

The *tophet* undoubtedly constitutes the most characteristic cultural manifestation in the Phoenician settlements of the central Mediterranean and the one that has furnished the most archaeological information for a study of the ceramic and epigraphic material relating to the Phoenicio-Punic world. *Tophet* is the name of an open-air sacred enclosure lying on the edge of the colonial centres, in which sacrifice was practised and very young children were cremated. The practice of a supposed holocaust of children, or *molk* sacrifice, in these precincts, described by several classical historians, gave the Carthaginians a terrible reputation and the reality of it attracted the attention of scholars some time ago; it is considered a 'barbarous' rite, difficult to grasp in its full meaning. The origin and antecedents of this type of sacrifice lie in the east and in particular in Phoenicia, and it is thought that the colonists may have inherited from their homeland the custom of sacrificing their sons in situations of emergency, war or epidemic.

The *tophet* is particularly interesting because in the west it constitutes the socio-religious institution most representative of the Phoenician establishments in Tunis, Sicily and Sardinia, and because it reveals the existence of social factors that, in our opinion, may help to define and differentiate categories of ancient colonial settlement.

In the Phoenician west today there is more archaeological than written information about a rite that some of the classical sources have no hesitation in rating as a holocaust in that the victim is sacrificed to the deity by fire. Undoubtedly the most spectacular *tophet* in the west was the one in Carthage, at Salammbô, which was in uninterrupted use for 600 years and for the period between the years 400 and 200 BC has yielded more than 20,000 cremation urns.

The name used to designate these enclosures or sanctuaries in the Phoenician colonies in the west is derived from the Hebrew word *tpt*, vocalized *tophet*, the name of a place which the Old Testament situates in the valley of Ben Hinnom, near Jerusalem, where children were sacrificed in honour of Baal (II Kings 23:10; Jeremiah 7:30–31). The name Hinnom or *tophet* was used for an installation, perhaps an altar, and was synonymous with 'hell' and 'slaughter'.

A review, brief though it be, of the antecedents of the rite in the east will enable us to determine the social and political context in which the sacrifice evolved and its social and ideological significance.

The antecedents: Phoenicia and Israel

The sacrifice of a child or a firstborn is exceedingly rare in the east before the Iron Age. Even so, the practice is recorded in Canaan in the age of the Patriarchs, or Middle Bronze Age II in Palestine (2000–1550 BC). The classic example is that of Abraham, prepared to sacrifice his firstborn son who was replaced in the end by a sheep (Genesis 22:1–2). So Yahweh too demanded human sacrifices.

The classic evolutionist theories, inspired by the example of Abraham, make the case for the evolution of human sacrifice in the Semitic world by the gradual substitution of a slave, an animal and, lastly, bread and wine, for the firstborn. In the texts from Ugarit there are allusions to the *mlk* sacrifice of a firstborn in times of danger or war and to the myth of Baal in which sacrifice by fire appears in association with fertility rites, rain and the annual renewal of the vegetation. In both cases the sacrifice is made for the collective good, the object that also appears in the self-immolation by fire of Melqart and Elissa.

In Israel, this kind of sacrifice was called '*molk* sacrifice' which, in the *tophet* at Jerusalem, designated the holocaust of a child, of the newborn, with the aim of restoring the forces of nature or the power of the state. So in the east the *molk* sacrifice was linked with Baal and Yahweh. However, in the east not a single archaeological trace has been found relating to the place of sacrifice – the *tophet* – or to the mechanisms of the cult – the *molk* sacrifice. Concerning its existence, all we have is written references.

For Phoenicia the most important source of information is Philo of Byblos (third century AD) who, as you remember, translated into Greek a Phoenician history, the work of Sanchuniathon who lived in Beirut around the year 1000 BC. In this work he records at the time of the Trojan war a Phoenician custom by which, in circumstances of grave danger, disasters, plagues or wars, the 'princes of the city' sacrificed the most cherished of their sons whom they beheaded in mysterious ceremonies in honour of Cronos (Baal Hammon), whom the Phoenicians called El. Originally, the god El had sacrificed his only son, Ieud, before the imminence of a danger threatening the country.

For that he dressed him 'like a king', prepared the altar and sacrificed him (Eusebius *Praep. evang.* 1, 10, 44).

It is admitted today that Philo's sources may have been ancient, which means that in Phoenicia firstborn sons and other children were sacrificed, but only in exceptional circumstances. The problem arises because this is the only testimony we know to the practice of human sacrifice in Phoenicia. It was undoubtedly an exceptional rite, dedicated without distinction to Baal or El, and probably fell into disuse around the seventh to sixth centuries BC, according to what the Greeks heard tell on the occasion of Alexander's siege of the city of Tyre in the fourth century BC (Quintus Curcius Rufus 4:3).

In any case, we need to bear in mind here the most significant feature of the '*molk*' sacrifice described by Philo: it was a ritual reserved exclusively to the monarchy or the aristocratic families of Canaan.

The *molk* sacrifice passed from Phoenicia to Israel and Syria where it was practised in honour of Hadad, Baal and Yahweh during the twelfth to seventh centuries BC. Because of the hostility with which the Hebrew prophets regarded this practice we have a considerable amount of information about it in Israel.

In Israel it was considered to be a foreign rite and of Canaanite origin, assimilated to the cult of the Greek Cronos or the Roman Saturn, who is none other than Baal Hammon (Jeremiah 19:5). The presence of a priestly body at the sacrifice (Leviticus 18:21; 20:1–5) is interesting. The protests and indignation provoked by the practice (Jeremiah 7:31; Ezekiel 16:18; 23:37) indicate that it had become a real danger in Israel and that it was widespread in some pagan circles. The earliest legal text known concerning this (Exodus 22:29–30: 'the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give to me') and the successive prohibitions against the *molk* sacrifice in the lawgiving of the Pentateuch indicate that it had taken root early in Israel, where the rite revolved round the sacred figure of the firstborn, typical of the Semitic world.

Various known examples serve to illustrate the range and meaning of human sacrifice in Palestine. Thus, in the period of the Judges (*c.* 1200–1000 BC) Jephtha offers to burn his daughter as a sacrifice in honour of Yahweh, in exchange for victory over his enemies (Judges 11:30–31). The sacrifice of sons to Yahweh before a battle was customary (1 Samuel 7:9; 13:9; 31:10). In the ninth century BC, King Mesha of Moab sacrificed his firstborn, burning him on the walls of the city on the occasion of the siege by Jehoram of Israel (II Kings 3:26–30).

King Ahaz of Judah (735–715 BC) also made his son a burnt offering in the valley of Hinnom (II Kings 16:3), a sacrifice that was repeated by his grandson Manasseh (II Kings 21:6; Jeremiah 32:31–35). Lastly, it was Josiah, in the seventh century BC, who, on the occasion of religious reforms initiated in his reign, succeeded in dismantling the *tophet* in Jerusalem, declaring the valley of Ben Hinnom to be impure and prohibiting the rite (II Kings 23:10; Jeremiah 7:30–32).

From all we have set down so far it can be inferred that the practice of human sacrifice has direct antecedents in Syria–Palestine, where practices of this type appear to have been exclusive to some of the patriarchs, chiefs and kings and linked to interests of state. With human sacrifice, burning or ritual death, the rulers hoped to calm the wrath of Yahweh or of Baal. However, in no case does it appear to have attained such magnitude and outstanding proportions, it never constituted an official and recognised act of worship and is very rare, not to say non-existent, in Phoenicia in the Iron Age.

Though foreign to classical thought and considered as idolatry on the part of the Hebrew and Graeco-Roman writers, human sacrifice appears to have been much more widespread than some of its detractors claim. Moreover it was practised in all the ancient civilizations. The world of Homer provides examples in three well-known cases: Iphigenia, sacrificed by her father Agamemnon; the Cretan Idomeneo who, on his return from Troy, sacrificed his son; and Achilles, who sacrificed twelve valiant Trojans on Patroclus' funeral pyre (*Iliad* 23:175–176). Yet again the practice is reserved for kings and heroes and is always exceptional.

Carthage and the historical tradition

In order to emphasise the idea of the coarseness and cruelty of the Carthaginian people and of their forebears, the Phoenicians, some sources attribute the regular practice of child holocaust to them. 'The Phoenicians, and more especially the Carthaginians, when they want some important project to succeed, promise to sacrifice a child to Cronos if their wish is fulfilled' (Clitarch *Schol.*, Plato *Rep.* 337 A). 'The Carthaginians living in Sardinia also sacrificed to Cronos on certain prescribed days' (*Schol.*, Homer *Od.* 20:302). Clitarch and Diodorus (20:14, 4–6) also tell us that the sacrifice took place in front of a bronze statue of the god, with arms outstretched over a blazing hearth; the child slid down over the arms and fell. It seems that the

victims were covered with a grinning mask and that is why, according to Clitarch, they died laughing and hence the term 'sardonic' for a sarcastic smile.

Justinus reports that the *molk* sacrifice was introduced into the west by Elissa in order to save Carthage and remain faithful to her dead husband. Elissa's suicide in the fire, which automatically conferred divine status on her, is a foundation myth involving class, and it is in her honour that children would have been sacrificed in Salammbô.

Other sacrifices and self-immolations by kings and generals of Carthage have a place in this class tradition. Thus we are told that in the fifth century BC, during the siege of Agrigentum, a terrible pestilence fell upon the troops of Hamilcar and Hannibal; Hamilcar, the surviving general, then sacrificed a child to Baal in order to obtain help from the gods (Diod. 18:86). The Carthaginian general Malco, defeated in battle and condemned to exile, had his son killed in front of the city (Justinus 13:7). Lastly, the general Hamilcar committed suicide by throwing himself on to a fire during the battle of Himera (Herod. 7:165–167).

Another tradition refers to collective holocausts within the Carthaginian aristocracy. Thus, in the year 310 BC, the Carthaginians were besieged by Agatocles of Syracuse and thought that Cronos–Baal had abandoned them, displeased because the custom of sacrificing the most noble children in his honour had declined and it was usual to buy children of the poor instead. The citizenry then decided to revive the old custom and Carthage organized a gigantic holocaust in which 500 children were sacrificed; as in former days, they were the sons of the noble and the powerful (Diodorus 20:14; Plutarch *De Superstitione* 13).

Molk sacrifice in Carthage only ceased when the city fell under the power of Rome in the year 146 BC (Quintus Curcius Rufus 4:3). Even so, and in spite of express prohibition by the Roman authorities, it continued to be practised in secret until the second century AD, which gives us an indication of how deeply rooted it was among the Carthaginians (Tertullian *Apolog.* 9:2–3).

Human sacrifice in Carthage, whether individual or collective, seems to have been a privilege of kings, military men and dignitaries, suggesting that it was a practice linked with the interests of the state and of the community, represented by the ruling class. Consequently it is inferred from the classical sources and in particular the writings of Clitarch, Porphyrion, Tertullian, Diodorus and Plutarch, that human sacrifice was a regular practice in Carthage. This contrasts with

historians of the stature of Thucydides, Polybius, Herodotus and Livy, who make no mention of it in their writings, which makes one suspect that the systematic practice of human sacrifice was very much a *sui generis* interpretation of a rite – that of cremating newborn babies – that was foreign to the classical world and misinterpreted by some of the writers hostile to Carthage.

In any case, we are not primarily interested in determining the reasons why a refined and cosmopolitan people reached such a degree of 'barbarity', nor in taking part in the polemic as to whether it was a regular or an exceptional practice; we should rather touch on the sociological aspect of the question through an institutional and social reading of the archaeological record. Indeed, the *tophets* of Carthage, Motya and Sardinia provide us today with enough information to attempt to penetrate the social and economic significance of human sacrifice and its direct relationship with specified categories of Phoenician settlement in the west.

Archaeology of the 'tophet'

In the west, the *tophet* is an open-air enclosure clearly marked out and surrounded by walls which define a space reserved for sacrifice, on the periphery and generally to the north of the inhabited centre (Fig. 60). Inside it were deposited cinerary urns, sealed at the top with a stone baetyl or pilaster; they are replaced by stelae with an inscription to Baal or Tanit from the sixth to fifth centuries BC onward.

The most spectacular *tophet* in the west is, of course, the one at Carthage, known as the 'precinct of Tanit' (Fig. 61). In uninterrupted use from the year 700 BC until the fall of Carthage in 146 BC, it has so far yielded more than 20,000 cinerary urns. It is surrounded by a stout wall, covered an area of 6,000 m^2 in the fourth century BC and in it up to nine superimposed levels of urns have been identified, correponding to three great phases of use: Tanit I (725–600 BC), II (600 to late fourth century BC) and III (third century to 146 BC).

Recent excavations at Salammbô have revealed the following significant aspects:

(a) Regular and individual, not massive, deposits were practised, predominantly of newborn babies in the seventh to sixth centuries BC and of up to three-year-old children in the fourth century BC. So it is not necessarily a matter of firstborns.

Fig. 60 The *tophet* at Sulcis

Fig. 61 The *tophet* of Salammbô, Carthage

(b) From the seventh century on, remains of goats and sheep appear inside the urns; so the substitution of animals was not gradual since it took place from the beginning.

(c) In the most ancient urns (seventh to sixth centuries BC), 62.5 per cent of the contents consist of human remains; only 30 per cent are animals and 7.5 per cent contain both a child and an animal. In the more recent urns, from the fourth century BC on, 88 per cent are human as against 10 per cent animals and 2 per cent both together. These analyses show that in Carthage the depositing of children inside urns, far from declining, increased to reach its highest levels in the fourth to third centuries BC. Between the years 400 and 200 BC, some 20,000 urns containing infant cremations were deposited in Salammbô, so there is no question of the sacrifices being casual or sporadic.

(d) In Tanit II, the presence of as many as three children in a single urn supports the notion of sacrificial offerings linked to family units.

Bone analyses so far carried out to determine the age of the human remains deposited in the urns of the *tophets* in Carthage, Tharros and Susa show that more than 80 per cent of those cremated were foetuses or newborn babies. It is obvious that for human sacrifice it was necessary that the child be born alive and be surrendered dead. In Tharros only 2 per cent of children were more than a few weeks or months old. Although it has not been possible to determine the exact causes of their deaths, everything points to them dying of natural causes, at birth or a few weeks later. Although human sacrifice may have been practised, the high proportion of newborn babies in the *tophets* shows that these enclosures served as burial places for children who died at birth or had not reached the age of two.

Fedele's analysis of the contents of the urns from the Tharros *tophet* suggests that from the beginning, in the seventh century BC, almost 50 per cent of the urns contain the remains of a child and a small sheep or goat. As at Salammbô, this means that it was a matter of association rather than substitution. In general it was newborn babies or children under six that were sacrificed, at the end of the summer judging by the plant remains that have been analysed.

The votive stelae found in the *tophets* in the west, of which there are thousands, usually have an inscription with a formula referring to human blood sacrifice (*mlk'dm*) or the substitution of a sheep for the child (*mlk'mr* or *molchomor*). In every case there are offerings from

individuals, intended as a gift, a promise or payment of a due to Baal Hammon in exchange for a favour received. These formulae show the existence of private, not public, rites, the exact meaning of which escapes us. We do not know how frequently these rites were practised, in which the animals – small sheep, goats, thrushes, blackbirds – formed a significant part of the ritual. In any case the animals were sacrificed not as a substitute for human victims, but as genuine sacrificial victims. Epigraphic studies suggest, moreover, that the word *mlk* does not designate a god, Moloch, but the sacrificial act itself.

In Carthage and Tharros, the relatively high percentage of premature and newborn babies and foetuses indicates that in most cases it was the remains of cremated stillborn children that were deposited in the urns, which would be logical up to a point in a period when infant mortality must have been fairly high. All this has fostered the idea, defended in recent years by some authors like Bénichou-Safar, Moscati, Teixidor and Ribichini, that regular, institutionalized human sacrifice did not exist and that the *tophet* was principally a necropolis for infants. The absence of tombs containing the newborn in the Phoenicio-Punic necropolises of the central Mediterranean would confirm that children were not buried next to adults, but in the *tophet*.

This more 'human' view of the Carthaginian religion, however, accepts that human sacrifice was practised in Carthage in exceptional cases and with the aim of appeasing the anger of the gods in extreme situations. In that sense, Stager's hypothesis that ritual infanticide existed in Carthage and was practised as a means of demographic control for economic and inheritance purposes is unconvincing. If that were so, the chosen victims would have been exclusively girls.

But the *tophet* was not simply an infant necropolis. Up until the Roman period, it was a place that was respected as a sacred area, reserved for those members of the community who had not gone through the rites of initiation or integration into the adult world. The practice of cremation in those precincts, until the Roman period when inhumation had become the predominant rite in the Punic communties of the west, indicates that, in the *tophet*, not only did traditional forms of burial continue to be practised – cremation as symbolic of purification of the body by fire – but that rites existed there involving the offering of animal victims to Baal.

Just as in some countries in the east even today, the *tophet* constituted a sacred place where those individuals were buried who did not belong to the community, who had not been ritually initiated, who

were marginalized by society and set apart. No doubt the practice of cremation in these special precincts shocked the classical writers, who interpreted the rites as human sacrifice.

Social and political significance of the 'tophet'

In the Phoenician colonies of the west, the *tophet* precinct began to be used barely a generation after the arrival of the first colonists on the site. The history of the Phoenician settlement thus appears to be very closely linked to that of the sacred precincts. Consequently it is logical that the *tophet* should appear to be a key piece in the reconstruction of the social, economic and ideological structure of the colonies.

The precinct of the *tophet* seems to be identified with the concept of citizenship and bestows a kind of title legitimizing citizens' and community rights. The formula that appears in several votive inscriptions in the *tophet* at Carthage, 'by decree of the people of Carthage', indicates the public and institutional nature of these sacred precincts, their strong conservatism and a clear intervention of the public authorities. The *tophets* were few in the west insofar as they were metropolitan sanctuaries, in which only those members with full rights in the colony sacrificed. Just one category of citizen had access to the sacrifice.

Furthermore, the *tophet* was not solely at the service of the civic bodies of the colony but also at that of the territory in its immediate control. Thus, for example, the Phoenician establishment on Monte Sirai, built as a subsidiary of Sulcis in the seventh century BC, would not possess its own *tophet* before the fourth to third centuries BC, that is to say, when it had established itself as an independent urban centre. Until then the central *tophet* for all those secondary establishments in the interior would have been the one at Sulcis.

The organization of this type of sanctuary was thus conditioned by the category of the colony and its territory. In the west, the *tophet* arose as soon as signs appeared of a qualitative and quantitative change in the socio-political structures of the Phoenician colonial enclave. In Carthage, for example, it only starts to function around 700 BC, in the centres in Sardinia even earlier. The *tophet* emerges at the same time as other structures and institutions: temples, fortifications and extensive necropolises. In other words, it only appears when a population increase and those features peculiar to an urban colony are recorded.

All this is undoubtedly exceedingly interesting when it comes to distinguishing categories of Phoenician settlement in the west. If we accept that the *tophet* is an entity expressing urban institutions, civic adminstration, community of sacrifice, family links and state intervention, we shall have to establish clear differences of category and function between the Phoenician establishments of the central Mediterranean and the more western group made up of Utica and the enclaves on the Iberian Peninsula and in Atlantic Morocco, where not a single *tophet* has been recorded so far. It is precisely those Tyrian enclaves that in the written tradition appear to be most closely linked to a temple economy.

Except in the case of Malta and the earliest settlements in Sicily, before the founding of Motya, all the Phoenician installations founded in the central Mediterranean show signs of permanence from the outset, which reflects a firm determination to develop into populous colonies. In some cases this determination is of a political nature (Carthage) or in others (Sulcis and perhaps Tharros as well) it is concerned with immediate territorial expansion into the interior, which sometimes finds expression in the building of sanctuaries or temples (Nora, Motya). In no case are there signs of a provisional attitude – absence of temples or construction of warehouses for merchandise – such as we find, for example, in the far west of the Mediterranean or in transit zones like Malta.

Characteristic of the group of Phoenician colonies in the central Mediterranean is an early concentration of colonial population in a few agglomerations, which, in 700 BC or even earlier, already attain the rank of urban colonies. This qualitative leap finds expression in the appearance of centralized religious and cultural institutions, collective works and a whole series of civico-religious elements that stick to a central model: that of Carthage.

The most significant civico-religious institution was the *tophet*. As an institution for worship and sacrifice it is easy to attribute its installation in the colonies of Sicily and Sardinia to the influence of Carthage. Although the antecedents of the *molk* sacrifice are encountered in the east, its definitive form and consolidation as a collective practice are of Carthaginian invention. The implanting of the *tophet* in Sicily and Sardinia linked those colonies of the central Mediterranean to the political interests of Carthage, insofar as it was political and social interests that may possibly have dictated the development and expansion of the *tophet* in the North African colony. The construction of a

space reserved for those individuals who had died before achieving the right to citizenship in the colonies of the central Mediterranean implies an unmistakable notion of urban community, of a civic body and of citizens' rights.

9

The colonies of the far west

1. GADIR AND THE ATLANTIC METAL TRADE

Classical historiography is unanimous in recognizing the silver trade as the objective of Phoenician expansion into the far west; and the procurement and production of silver on a large scale means Gadir and its immediate hinterland, Tartessos (Fig. 62). For once the archaeological record provides an abundance of elements corroborating this historical fact.

Diodorus tells us that the Phoenicians obtained so much silver in Iberia that, thanks to the profits made, they were in a position to found many colonies in Africa, Sardinia and Spain (Diodorus 5:35, 5). Consequently, Gadir was to be the origin not only of Tyre's wealth but also to a large extent of the Phoenician diaspora to the central and western Mediterranean.

Strabo states that, from very remote times, the Tyrians possessed the best lands in Iberia and Libya; and in the Iberian Peninsula they occupied the whole of Turdetania (Andalusia), where Phoenician was spoken during the first centuries BC and AD (Strabo 1:3, 2; 3:2, 13–14).

In order to give a more coherent account, we shall distinguish two large zones in the western Mediterranean, that of the commercial axis of Gadir and its huge sphere of economic influence (Tartessos, the Portuguese and Moroccan coasts and the coastline of Oran), and that of the network of Phoenician establishments on the coast of Malaga, Granada, Almería and Ibiza, which we shall analyse in the next chapter.

For ancient Gadir, we can count on a host of written references concerning its history and general aspect but on very little archaeological evidence. Nevertheless we can establish its economic importance through its direct influence on Tartessian territory in the eighth to sixth centuries BC.

Fig. 62 Phoenician colonies (●) and indigenous settlements (▲) in the south of Spain

As in previous chapters, we shall select those settlements or cultural elements that seem to us to be most significant for a reconstruction of the colonial process in the west, or that provide the most information about economic and commercial activities.

GADIR AND ITS SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

Introduction

In order to build up a rough picture of what Phoenician Cadiz was and signified, we are forced to rely on descriptions by Greek and Latin authors of the Hellenistic and Roman periods, and on the testimony of geographers and travellers who visited the city during the second century BC and collected from the Gaditanians tales and legends concerning its Phoenician origins. It is difficult to compare these tales, which are mostly passed on by Strabo, with archaeological evidence, since levels of human occupation have been superimposed on the ruins of the old Tyrian colony right down to the present day.

Recovery of Phoenician Gadir is an almost impossible undertaking nowadays. Nevertheless, items about the city and especially about its temple, reported by historians and geographers in antiquity, late as they are, provide some notably interesting information. The classical writers not infrequently describe a city and a form of worship that they do not in fact understand, because of its oriental features. When they write about the origins of the Phoenician city, they are doing it under the influence of the grandeur and prosperity of Cadiz in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Gades was then one of the most important cities in the Roman world and had the greatest population after Rome. It was renowned for its shipyards, its fishing and preserving industries, its export trade and its opulence – 'joyful and licentious city' (Martial 1:61, 9; 5:78, 26) – and above all its famous Herakleion – the temple of Hercules, visited by illustrious politicians of the day. A city like that had to possess a grand, noble and remote past.

When the geographer Strabo described the city in the first century AD on the basis of the account by three Greek travellers of the second century BC – Polibius, Posidonius and Artemidorus – the utmost confusion reigned on the subject of its origins. Gadir was confused with Tartessos, a kingdom that had already vanished, so that it is also said to be a river or a city (Strabo 3:1, 6; 3:2, 11; Herodotus 1:163; 4:152). The confusion probably arises because both had symbolized the same

thing in the past: opulence and wealth from silver (Pliny *Nat. Hist.* 4:22; Avienus *O.M.* 85).

Be that as it may, there can be no doubt about the Phoenician origin of Cadiz. This is shown by the name Gadir, *gdr* in Phoenician, meaning 'wall', 'enclosed place' or 'fortified citadel' and alluding probably to the walled precinct round the colony in its early days.

The Greek authors hellenized the name, which always appears in the plural – *Gadeira, Gedeiroi* – and it became definitively latinized with the form of *Gades*, also plural. This is because Gades was made up of various islands, nowadays a peninsula.

The myth of the foundation and historical chronology

The authors who have left us most details about the origins of Gadir are Strabo and Velleius Paterculus, both from the first century AD, who collected accounts from other, more ancient historians and travellers.

Velleius belongs to that learned band who associate the Trojan War, the travels of Hercules and the Phoenicians in a single tale and so find themselves forced to push the chronology of the foundation back a long way. As will be remembered, this historian tells us that a Tyrian fleet had founded Gadir at the far end of the world eighty years after the Trojan War, when the Heraclides were returning to Greece and the monarchy in Athens fell (*Hist. Rom.* 1:2, 3), which situates the event in the years 1104–1103 BC (Mela 3:6, 46). We shall not repeat here the scant guarantees offered by these sources of information, and we refer you to Chapter 7.

More interesting is the information gathered by the Greek Posidonius, who heard the history told around 100 BC in Gadir itself. This is how Strabo (3:5, 5) tells the story:

> About the founding of Gadeira, this is what the Gaditanians say they remember: that an oracle ordered the Tyrians to found a settlement at the Columns of Hercules; those sent to explore arrived at the straits next to Calpe [Gibraltar] and thought that the promontories that form the straits were the boundaries of the inhabited earth and the end of Hercules' labours; then, supposing that these were the columns of which the oracle had spoken, they dropped anchor in a certain place very close to the Columns, where stood the city of the Exitani [Almuñécar]. But as they offered sacrifice to the gods at that point on the coast and the victims were not propitious, they returned. Later the envoys passed through the straits, arriving at an island dedicated to Hercules that lies close to

Onuba [Huelva], a city of Iberia and some one thousand five hundred stadia beyond the straits; as they thought that these were the columns, they sacrificed once more to the gods; but again the victims were unfavourable and they returned to their country. On the third expedition, they founded Gadeira and erected the sanctuary in the eastern part of the island and the city in the western part.

So the Tyrian foundation of Gadir cost them three trial voyages before they found the most suitable place to settle. This is partly a reflection of the difficulties for shipping of going through the Straits of Gibraltar in adverse weather conditions (see Chapter 6).

Diodorus added a little to the account by Posidonius, stating that the Tyrians founded a city (*polis apoikos*) close to the Columns and called it Gadeira, on a peninsula on which they erected a sumptuous temple to Hercules (Melqart) and instituted magnificent sacrifices according to 'Phoenician usage' (25:10. 1). He tells us too that they arrived driven before a storm and takes it for granted that their purpose was not colonization but trade (5:20, 1–4). For Diodorus, the main Phoenician colony in the west was Gadir and not Carthage.

The interesting thing to emphasise here is not so much the chronology or the misadventures of the Tyrian fleet but, yet again, the politico-economic background to the founding of Gadir. As usual in the classical world, the founding of the colony is said to be due to chance, to a storm or to an oracle. Nevertheless it is noted that Tyre had the firm intention of founding a settlement in a very specific zone and in the vicinity of a land rich in silver, gold and copper, and the Tyrians must have had previous knowledge or intuition about the possibilities of exploiting these materials.

The Tyrian oracle is more significant because through it the god – no doubt Melqart – gives the explorers some very precise geographical directions. This reflects a fact of particular interest: that the commercial initiative for the founding of Gadir at the end of the known world is down to the temple in Tyre.

We do not know at what exact moment Melqart decided to organize this commercial enterprise. In any case, it could not have taken place in the twelfth century BC, since in Phoenicia and in Tyre the cult of Melqart does not predate the tenth to ninth centuries BC. In the final instance, it is the archaeological evidence from the territory close to Cadiz that has the last word. The indigenous Tartessian settlements on the bay of Gadir, some of them inhabited since the second millennium BC, did not receive their first Phoenician imports until the years

760–750. This fact seems to us to be a decisive argument to settle an interminable discussion about the historical value of the classical sources in the question of the origins of Cadiz.

Palaeogeography and archaeology of the Gaditanian Archipelago

The difficulties and risks presented by the bay of Cadiz to all sailing ships have been described in Chapter 6. The dangers involved in passing through the Straits of Gibraltar and the buffetings of the ocean made a colonial establishment in unknown waters very uncomfortable indeed for Mediterranean seamen. Only genuine economic rewards and the certainty of obtaining fat profits could justify the location of Phoenician Gadir beyond the straits.

In fact, being sited close to the mouth of the Guadalete and not far from the valley of the Guadalquivir, Gadir formed a bastion in the midst of the sea and guarded a bay that ensured direct access to the mineral wealth in the spurs of the Sierra Morena and the mountainous regions of the province of Huelva. Its island character made it safe from possible dangers from the sea or the mainland.

It is not easy to imagine what the bay of Cadiz looked like in antiquity, due to the major geographical transformations that have taken place there right down to our own days. The alluvial deposits from the river Guadalete in the eastern part of the bay have been reducing and filling up a bay that was much bigger in antiquity and they have finally joined the ancient archipelago to the coast (Fig. 63). Moreover, erosion by the sea on the western flank of the bay, continuous since antiquity, has won 3 km of water for the sea in the past 2000 years, reducing the size of the islands and forming cliffs in the western and southern zones of the island of Cadiz. This explains the controversy about the exact site of the colony and its sanctuaries, a controversy that was initiated in Roman times as a result of the changes experienced even then in the form and extent of the primitive archipelago.

To the transformation of the landscape must be added the confusion that reigned in the Roman period in descriptions of the topography of Cadiz. Pliny, for example, states in the year 77 AD that the Gaditanian archipelago was formed by three islands, but he confines his description to only two of them, a big island called Kotinoussa because it contained an abundance of olives or oleasters, and another, small one called Erytheia, where the *oppidum* of Gades was located and which the natives of the place also called Insula Iunonis (*Nat. Hist.* 4:22).

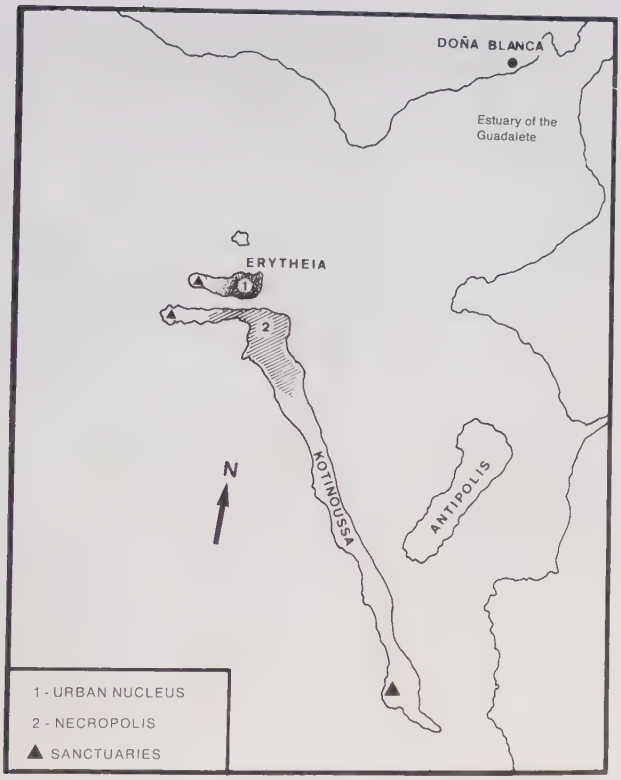


Fig. 63a The bay of Cadiz today

According to the descriptions of other classical authors, the principal island was long and narrow and terminated in a promontory at each end; on the western promontory was the city and on the eastern, the famous temple of Melqart–Hercules (Mela 3:46), with a distance of 12 Roman miles, equivalent to 18 km, between the two (Strabo 3:5, 5; Antonine Itinerary 408:3–4).

It is certain, likewise, that in the past Gadir constituted a fortress, also called *Arx gerontis* or the castle of Gerion, close to which was an island dedicated to Venus marina (Astarte), with a temple and an oracle (Avienus *Ora Maritima* vv. 85 and 267–270). The Phoenicio-Punic city was very small until, in the Roman period, Balbo, one of its citizens, built a very much bigger city nearby, which was called Didyme (twin or double) and constructed a harbour on the mainland, the Portus Gaditanus, perhaps in Puerto Real (Strabo 3:5, 3).

In short, from the descriptions in the classics we can infer the

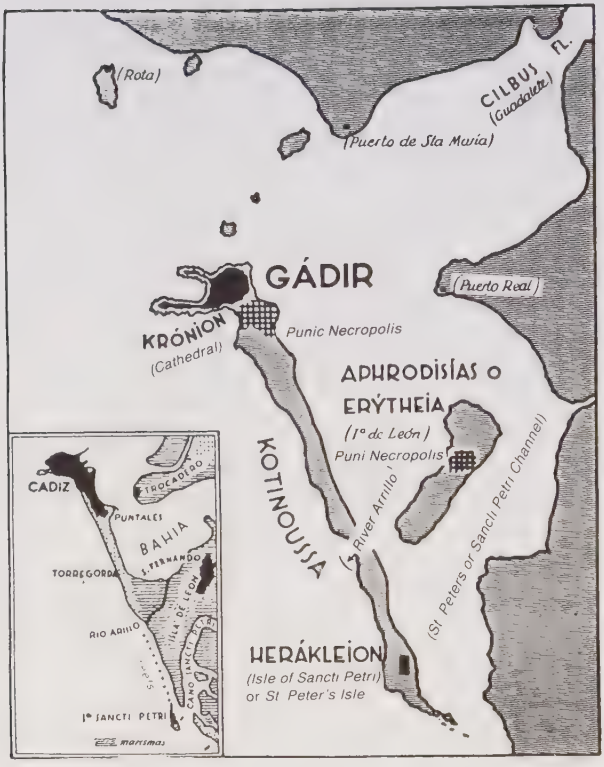


Fig. 63b One alternative model for the reconstruction of the ancient archipelago

existence of an archipelago of three main islands, which would explain the plural form used to designate the area. In Erytheia, the smaller island, the Tyrian colony, called Aphrodisias or Insula Iunonis, was located. Kotinoussa, the larger island, housed the temple of Melqart at its eastern end; the location of the temple on the present-day islet of Sancti Petri has not presented too many difficulties. A third island, unnamed, used to be generally identified with the island of León (San Fernando). And yet the modern map of the bay shows only a long peninsula linked to the mainland where Kotinoussa and Erytheia used to be (Fig. 64).

The ancient Tyrian colony is usually located on the site of the old centre of modern Cadiz and its siting on the small island of San Sebastian, as Peman and Schulten claimed formerly, has been dis-

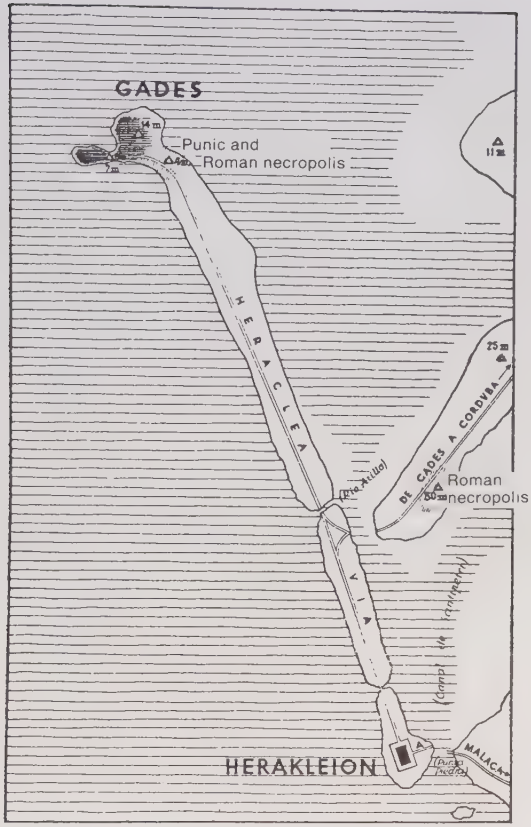


Fig. 63c A second alternative model for the reconstruction of the ancient archipelago

missed. Moreover, the existence of the Gaditanian necropolis of the Punic period in the Puertas de Tierra region invalidates the theory that the Phoenician city reached the area of the isthmus of the island of Cadiz.

Recent geological and archaeological work has settled the problem of the topography of the bay of Gadir, apparently for good. It has thus been possible to identify an ancient channel some 150 m wide which split the island of Cadiz in two (Fig. 65). This channel, known as the channel of Bahia-Caleta, was deep and narrow and was probably originally an ancient course of the river Guadalete. So it marked the edge of a smaller islet some 1,500 m in diameter to the northwest of the

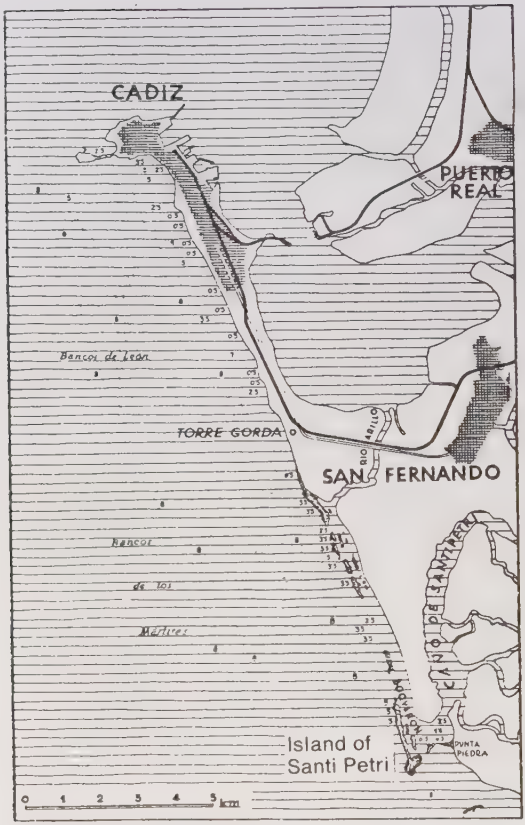


Fig. 63d A third alternative model for the reconstruction of the ancient archipelago

island of Cadiz, on a high point of which the nineteenth-century city was raised. The ancient acropolis of Gadir was probably located on the highest promontory of present-day Cadiz, in the so-called Torre de Tavira. The first island on which the Tyrian colony was set up – no doubt Erytheia – must have been very limited in extent and very similar to that of the old city centre of Cadiz, reckoned to be not more than 10 hectares.

The Phoenicio-Punic necropolis of Gadir, then, was in the area outside the walls and separated from the colony by a channel of water. Consequently, Gadir reproduces a Phoenician settlement model which was to be common in the west, as will be seen later (Chapter 10). The recent find of early cremation tombs beneath the fifth- to

Fig. 64 Aerial view of Cadiz

third-century BC Punic necropolis corroborates the original position of the Gaditanian necropolis on the other side of a watercourse to the east of the city. It was on the land occupied by the necropolis in Puertas de Tierra that Balbo was to build Roman Gades or Neapolis at a time when the ancient Bahia-Caleta channel had already been blocked.

The descriptions by the classical authors, and in particular that of Pliny, are consequently correct and show that the latter consulted very ancient sources of information, since the three islands no longer existed in his day.

We can trace in general lines the following geographical and archaeological reconstruction of the bay of Cadiz in the Phoenician period: there were in fact at least three islands in the bay and there is no reason to doubt that the most important was Erytheia, the smallest, lying to the north of the channel and housing the walled Tyrian colony – the *Arx Gerontis* – on the small mound of Torre Tavira. It would correspond to the ancient centre of modern Cadiz and was also known as Aphrodisias or Insula Iunonis, possibly because a sanctuary to Astarte (Avienus' Venus marina) had been raised there; the sanctuary may have been sited in the modern Punta de la Nao. The little Tyrian colony possessed an excellent harbour in the south, in the channel of

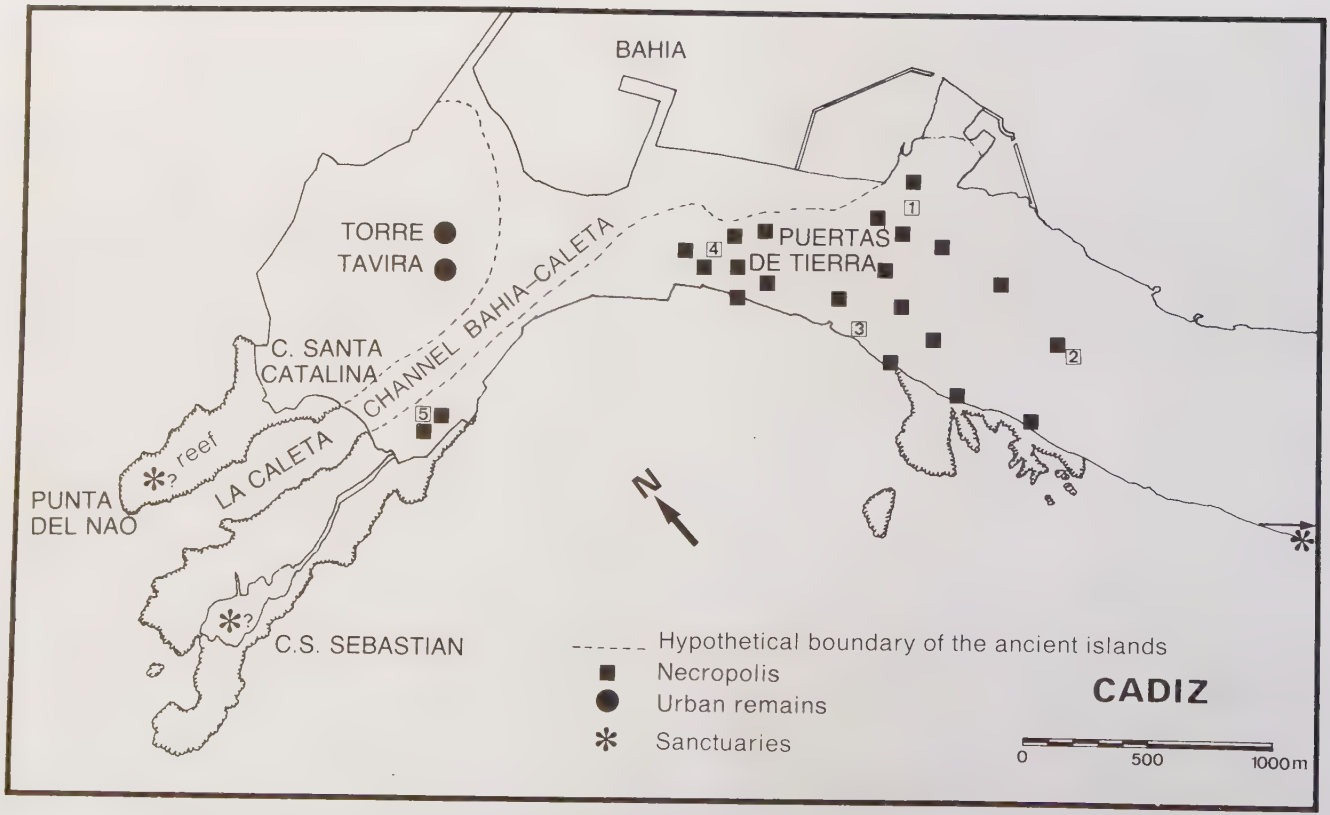


Fig. 65 Reconstruction of the island of Cadiz and position of the principal archaeological remains

Fig. 66 Proto-Aeolian capital from Cadiz

Bahia-Caleta, which almost constituted an enclosed harbour or *cothon*.

The second island, Kotinoussa, stretched from the present castle of San Sebastian to the islet of Sancti Petri. In the area close to the channel, the Puertas de Tierra necropolis was built; it has been known since 1887 and until a little while ago no burials earlier than the fifth century were known. On the small hill of the castle of San Sebastian, a second Gaditanian sanctuary may have been sited, the Kronion or temple to Cronos (Baal Hammon), mentioned by the classical authors (Strabo 3:5, 3; Pliny *Nat. Hist.* 4:120). In the sea close to the southern flank of the island of San Sebastian a limestone capital was discovered some time ago; it is 27 cm tall and in the proto-Aeolan style, which is dated to the eighth to seventh centuries BC. Its decoration of volutes and its form (Fig. 66) are related to

Fig. 67 Bronze statuettes from the bay of Cadiz

architectonic elements from Megiddo, Jerusalem and Tyre and it may have decorated the entrance to an ancient temple. It is the only piece of monumental religious architecture that we know, so far, from the Phoenician colonies on the Iberian peninsula, which once again makes Cadiz different from the rest of the Tyrian establishments in southern Spain, which do not have the characteristics of a central place of worship.

Both in this area and in the original island of Cadiz, some recently identified archaeological remains suggest that the place was already inhabited in the Chalcolithic. Nonetheless, when the Tyrians arrived the islands had long been uninhabited.

In the extreme southeast of the island of Kotinoussa, in Sancti Petri, the famous temple of Melqart was erected, exactly 18 km from Torre

Fig. 67 (cont.)

de Tavira, in the vicinity of which submerged monumental remains have also been identified. Numerous bronze statuettes come from this area; they were recovered from the sea (Fig. 67) and represent a male deity in the style of the eastern 'smiting god' and might be ex-votos connected with the ancient temple.

The third island, León, now San Fernando, the original name of which is not known, appears to have been uninhabited until the Roman period.

But the Tyrian colony was not restricted to a couple of islands close to the mainland. Facing the mouth of the Guadalete, Gadir dominated an important inlet which provided it with easy access straight into the valley of the Guadalquivir, the main artery of communication for the whole of Lower Andalusia. Consequently the colony lay at the exit

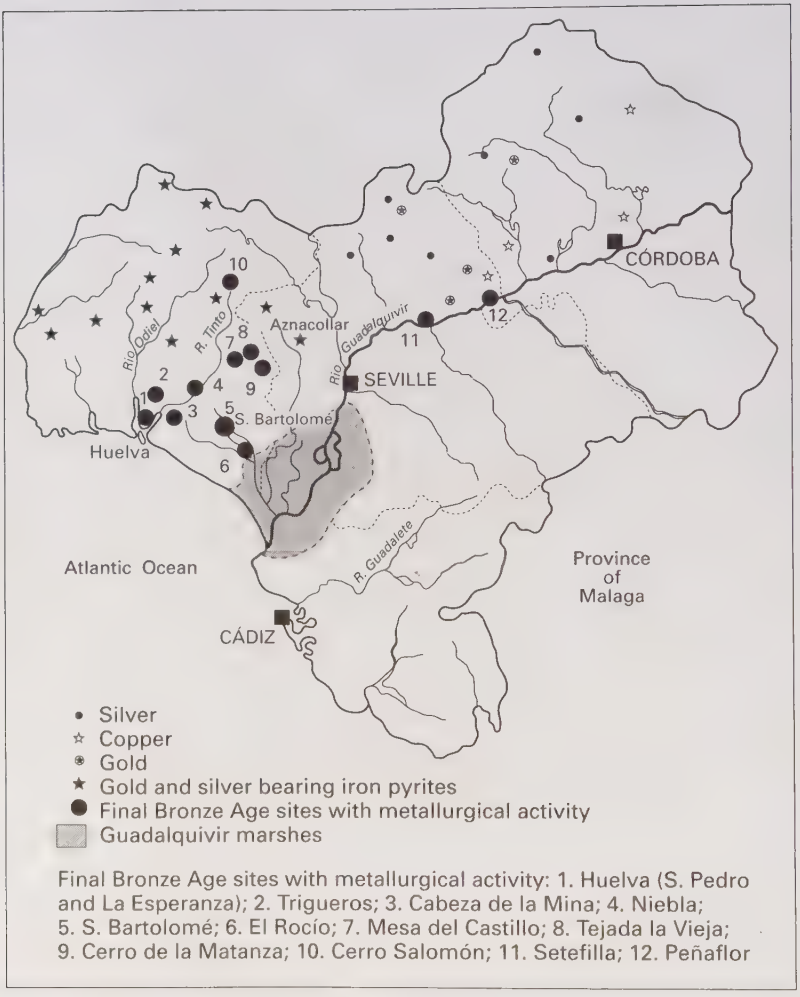


Fig. 68 Minero-metallurgical sites on the lower Guadalquivir

point for the riches from the interior of the country and the coveted metals from the Tartessian region.

Archaeology reveals that at the arrival of the Phoenicians in the eighth century, the whole countryside and the eastern shore of the ancient estuary of the Guadalquivir were densely populated by Final Bronze Age Tartessian communities who, from their coastal settlements, dominated the entire bay and the extensive estuary – the ancient Lake Ligustino – navigable as far as Seville itself (Fig. 68).

Fig. 69 View of the excavations at Castillo de Doña Blanca

Only 4 km to the north of the Puerto de Santa Maria, on the estuary of the river Guadalete, the indigenous or Tartessian settlement of Castillo de Doña Blanca first made contact with Gadir around the years 760–750 BC, judging by the first Phoenician imports found on the site. Lying on a small inlet protected from the east winds, the settlement very soon covered 5 hectares, becoming an appendage of the Tyrian colony and its main port of embarkation on the mainland (Fig. 69). The imports of Phoenician pottery, dated to about 750 BC, that appear in Tartessian settlements in the interior, such as Berrueco, Carambolo or Carmona (Fig. 70), suggest a relatively rapid extension of Gadir's trade towards the Guadalquivir valley.

The temple of Melqart, centre for the protection of trade

Until the end of the ancient world, the fame and prestige of the temple of Melqart in Cadiz was considerable. The fact that Roman emperors of Hispanic origin, like Trajan and Hadrian, raised the Gaditanian Heracles–Hercules to the status of an imperial cult and struck coins bearing the effigy of the god, undoubtedly increased its importance in the imagination of the classical writers.

The classical sources describe a Romano-Hellenistic sanctuary in Gadir, although the information they have passed on to us refers

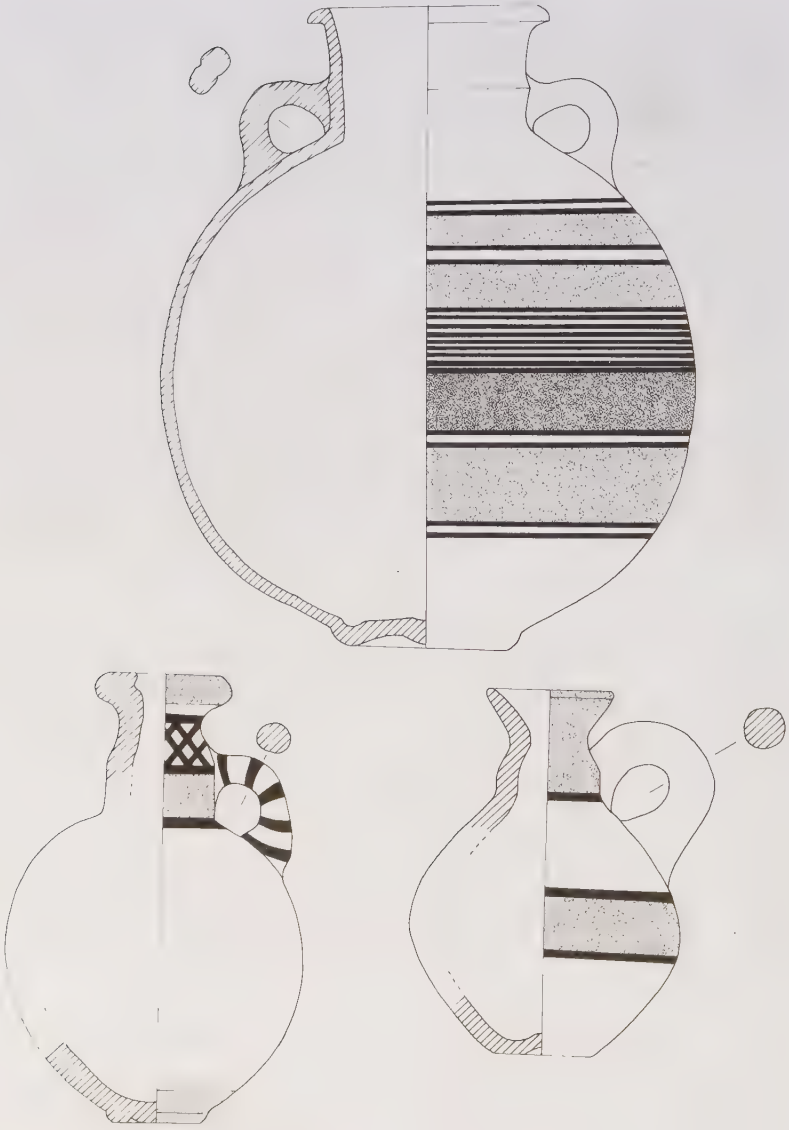


Fig. 70 Phoenician pottery from La Cruz del Negro, Carmona (seventh century BC)

chiefly to a form of worship that preserved elements and traits of Semitic and eastern origin until a very late date. Thanks to these testimonies and to the information afforded by other known temples of Melqart in the Mediterranean, we are in a position to reconstruct a rough picture of the temple in Gadir and what it signified.

It should not be forgotten that, in the case of Gadir and Lixus, the building of a temple dedicated to the national god of Tyre preceded or coincided with the founding of the colony. In Cadiz, it was in obedience to the command of an oracle or, if you like, of the political institutions of Tyre. In that way, Melqart sanctioned and legitimized a commercial initiative and, from his position at the eastern end of Kotinoussa, only 800 metres from the mainland, exercised a tutelary function over the passage through the Cadiz channel.

The sanctuary and its cult

Many of the elements of worship in the temple in Gadir were foreign to Greco-Roman religion and disconcerting to the classical authors, who singled out its magnificence (Diodorus 5:20, 2) and its architecture and rites of Phoenician origin (Arrian *Alex.* 2:16,4).

Like the temple in Tyre it had three altars on which the priests preserved the eternal flame and sacrificed animals daily (Silius Italicus 3:29; Porfirius 1:25). In addition there is mention of two springs of sweet water inside the temple which, by way of sacred basins, were used for worship (Strabo 3:5, 7–8).

The absence of images or figured representations of the god is another Phoenician aspect of the worship and is in line with the Semitic religions, which prohibited representations of the deity. The strict banning of cult images in the *sancta sanctorum* lasted until the first century AD in Gadir, and this never failed to surprise visitors (Silius Italicus 3:31–32). According to legend, the relics of Hercules, who died in Spain (Mela 3:46), were preserved in the Gaditanian temple, or else they had been transferred from Tyre to Gadir (Justinus 44:5, 2).

Equally celebrated were the two bronze columns (Strabo 3:5, 5–6) 8 cubits – a little over 3 m – tall, which flanked the temple of Gadir, in the style of the two columns of the temple in Tyre. The story goes that the accounts of the expenses involved in building the Gaditanian temple had been engraved on them in a few enigmatic inscriptions that were already indecipherable in the days of Strabo (3:5, 5; Philostratus *v. Apoll. Tiana* 5:5) People have believed they saw an echo of these two

famous Tyrian stelae in the Columns of Hercules. The term, whether it be geographical or architectural, may have been of Phoenician origin, which, when Hellenized from the fourth century BC on, had to be reinterpreted by the Greek historians on the basis of a religion and a god that were impersonal, devoid of icons and mortal, totally different from their own. Be that as it may, in the Canaanite and Phoenician religions the presence of two columns, stelae or marker stones represents and at the same time expresses the deity itself.

The sanctuary at Cadiz sheltered, in addition, an oracle, administrative buildings and living quarters for the staff and the priests responsible for the worship. Access to the Gaditanian temple was reserved exclusively for the priests, who officiated before the altar with bare feet, shaven heads and wearing tunics of white linen (Silius Italicus 3:21 and 28). It follows that the tonsure conferred on them the status of genuine, professional priests. And, as in Tyre, they formed a hierarchical body with a high priest at the top (Porphyrius 1:25), whose power must have been considerable.

To judge by other known examples, we can imagine that we have here a priestly organization administered by a very few families, who handed the rites of worship down from generation to generation. This type of organization, based on an exclusive and engrossing service, ruled by the 'possessed of god' or the 'pure', is characteristic of the temples of Melqart in Tyre, Syria, Thassos and Ara Maxima (Van Berchem 1967).

In Gadir, as in Tyre, a festival commemorating the resurrection of Melqart was celebrated every year in the months of February and March. Access was prohibited to foreigners (Pausanias 10:4, 6) and, in Tyre at least, a human victim was sacrificed by fire (Pliny *Nat. Hist.* 36:39). Cicero is probably alluding to this when he refers to 'barbarous' sacrifices of human beings in Gades (Cicero *Pro Balbo* 43; *Ad. Fam.* 10:32, 3), the only known reference to human sacrifice in the Gadir area. In any case, this does not appear to be a matter of the *molk* sacrifice of the Carthaginian region. The immolation of a human victim, whether in Gadir or in Tyre, may have been connected with the actual worship of Melqart, a god who went annually through a process of passion, death and resurrection and who, as redeemer of life (agriculture), died by fire (summer) every year.

The long survival of all these rites, customs and practices of oriental worship in Roman Gades shows to what extent the cult of the Tyrian Melqart had taken root in the region. The fact that the cult was still

celebrated in the Phoenician manner in the Roman period, perpetuating the strict observance of rites directed and controlled by a high priest, is equally an indication of the conservative power of a priestly caste, capable of preserving certain customs that were totally alien to the classical world.

In support of the hypothesis of the Tyrian origin of the temple in Gadir, we can instance other cultural features that usually appear in association with the cult of Melqart in the eastern Mediterranean: the regulation emphatically banning pigs, animals hateful to the god, and women from entering the sanctuary (Silius Italicus 3:23–24; Diodorus 5:20; Apianus 1:2).

Contribution of the temple to the economy of Gadir

The temple at Cadiz was not used exclusively as a place of worship and sacrifice. It must be remembered who Melqart of Tyre was in the framework of Phoenician religion, a religion that constituted a basic instrument of their commercial and colonial policy. Melqart, the 'lord of Tyre', represented the power of the monarchy insofar as he constituted the deified form or theological exaltation of the king of Tyre. In distant places where he possessed a temple, his function was twofold: to ensure the tutelage of the temple of Tyre and the monarchy over the commercial enterprise, thus converting the colony into an extension of Tyre; and also to guarantee the right of asylum and hospitality, which, in distant lands, was equivalent to endorsing contracts and commercial exchanges. In addition, the temple served as a religious, political and economic link between the colony and the metropolis, in which the priests had an outstanding part to play.

In ancient trade, the temple built close to a market or place of exchange guaranteed the protection of visitors and merchants, and the religious institution acted at times as an efficient financial intermediary or bank. The sanctuaries in antiquity were the prime places of commercial transactions in a foreign country. The first condition of any market or trading colony set up on a frontier or in a distant land was to ensure that its visitors were not molested or robbed. And, as a general rule, that security was offered by a god, under whose auspices and protection deals were verified. The name of the god was invoked in oaths sanctioning contracts.

Indeed, we know that the monarchs of developed countries negotiated covenants or commercial treaties, as did Hiram and Solomon. But between unequal or colonial societies, the only security offered lay

in the recognized sovereignty of a god in his temple or sacred precinct. A supernatural or divine presence automatically converted any act of fraud or violence into sacrilege and destroyed the mutual confidence between the two parties, by virtue of the norms of hospitality and asylum. The Greeks called this guarantee *asyle*. The quality of the merchandise, exchange equivalencies and weights were also under the protection of the god. This is why Hercules–Melqart was called 'Hercules ponderum'. In its turn the temple fulfilled the role of treasury and bank and could keep a register of transactions. In this way, yet again, the deity replace the political authority.

In exchange for all this, the god received taxes and dues in the form of offerings, jewels and money, which were administered by the priests. There are reports, at a later date, of substantial treasure in the temple at Gadir (Livy 28:36, 2). It is known too that Melqart of Gadir enjoyed the privilege of receiving legacies (Ulpianus 22:6). In every way the building of the temple at Gadir proved a good investment.

It is possible that the first Tyrian colonies in the west, like Gadir, started just as sanctuaries administered by a priestly group directly linked to the interests of Tyre. Melqart not only extended his protection over the commercial undertakings but he also set himself up as protector of the colonists in a foreign land. Phoenician seafarers came to his temple to offer sacrifices to him once they had achieved their objectives in the region (Avienus, *O.M.* 358). This explains why, as patron of seafarers, he had a temple in the main ports of call on the route westwards: Cyprus, Malta, Nora, Gadir.

To enable a trading post to progress from a foundational stage of simple barter to regular exchange relations with the indigenous population, the most effective formula in ancient societies was to resort to the protection of a god who would be respected by the natives as well, since respect for the foreigner was dependent on the respect in which his gods were held. The native world knew nothing about duties or markets and the political authority of the colonists – in this case, the king of Tyre – was ill defined as far as his power in a foreign territory was concerned. Phoenician polytheism and the perfect organization of the practices of the cult in the Gaditanian temple facilitated the assimilation by the indigenous population of the Tyrian cult, and the presence of Melqart made it possible to create new forms of market because, as the representative of the authority of Tyre, he offered the conditions necessary for initiating peaceful contacts with the natives.

In any case, we can say that the building of the temple of Melqart in

association with the founding of the colony took place in the framework of a precise political and economic strategy. Temple and colonial foundation merge into one because the political will existed to initiate regular, organized trade. And not only would the temple have had an economic function but, as the pivot and protector of a commercial diaspora, it was able to preserve the original cultural integrity of the colonists which amounted in a way to social control of the colonial population through religion.

A legend relates that Archaleus, a son of Phoinix, king of Tyre, and closely involved with metallurgy, had been the founder of Gadir (Claudius Iolaus *FGH* 788). Here we see that the mythical founder of Gadir would have actually been the son of the king of Tyre and, at the same time, Melqart in his hellenized form (Archaleus = Heracles). This legend brings together in a single myth the Tyrian monarchy, the god Melqart and metallurgical activity, three elements that appear equally associated in other minero-metallurgical regions of the Mediterranean controlled by the Phoenicians (cf. Herod. 2:44). This is undoubtedly the key to the significance of the Phoenician foundation of Gadir: the political and religious institutions of Tyre and their interest in the Tartessian silver market.

Silver extraction and the silver trade

The origin of the Phoenician expeditions to the west seems to be generally related to the wealth of silver in the Iberian Peninsula. And in that peninsula, silver is synonymous with Tartessos, the territory stretching along the lower valley of the Guadalquivir and Huelva in the Final Bronze and Early Iron Ages. The wealth of silver and other metals in Lower Andalusia and the Atlantic region is reflected in many myths, legends and place names alluding to a kind of Eldorado in the far west. Tyre was to be the first to exploit and make a profit from all this economic potential.

One of the earliest known mentions of the west was picked up by Estesicorus around the year 600 BC and, alluding specifically to silver, it describes the immense sources of silver-bearing ore on the Tartessos river (Strabo 3:2. 11). Place names and mythical names of native kings in the region contain the root *arg-* as a symbol of that wealth, for example the *Mons Argentarius*, possibly the Sierra Morena, and Argantonio. And we recall the voyage of the Samian Colaios to Tartessos, where he picked up a cargo of 60 talents of silver, equiva-

lent to some 1000 to 2000 kg of ore (Herod. 4:152). The arrival of the Phoenicians in this area is associated with a gigantic forest fire, which is said to have led to the discovery of tons of silver ore (Diodorus 5:35, 4–5):

> Having spoken of Iberia, it seems appropriate to mention its silver mines since this is the richest country in that metal, which brings large incomes to the exploiters . . . As in [the Pyrenees] there were many leafy woods, the shepherds had set fire to them – it is said – a long time before, so that the woodlands had been burning throughout the sierra. After burning for many days, the fire also scorched the surface of the ground, which gave rise to the name Pyrenees, used to designate these mountains. Much silver trickled away from the fiery ground and, as they melted, the silver-bearing ores formed countless rivulets of pure silver. The natives did not know how to exploit it but once the Phoenicians heard of the affair, they bought the silver in exchange for objects of negligible value. The Phoenicians took the silver to Greece, to Asia and to all the other countries then known, thus obtaining great riches. It is said that such was the cupidity of the traders that they replaced the lead anchors of their ships with silver ones after there was no more room for silver in the vessels, and there was still a great quantity of the metal left over. This commercial traffic was long the source of a great increase in the power of the Phoenicians, who founded many colonies, some in Sicily and neighbouring islands and some in Libya, Sardinia and Iberia.

Although the etymology of the Pyrenees (pyr = fire) is incorrect and the report is undoubtedly referring to Tartessian silver, this text, ascribed to Timeus or Posidonius, has a special interest for us. In the first place, it makes clear that the main reason for the Phoenician expansion to the west was to obtain silver. In the second place, it is stated that the Phoenicians took advantage of the ignorance of the natives to acquire it in exchange for gewgaws. In the third place, the legend leaves no doubt that the prosperity of the Phoenicians, that is to say Tyre, was due to trading in Iberian silver, which they sold on to Greece and Asia. Be that as it may, the exploitation of Iberian silver seems to have been the prerogative of the state of Tyre and preceded the founding of the colonies in North Africa, Sicily, Sardinia and the Iberian Peninsula itself.

Other classical authors tell the same story (Strabo 3:2, 9; Atenaios 6:233) and emphasize the skill shown by the Phoenicians in appropriating huge cargoes of silver in exchange for oil and cheap goods (Pseudo-Aristotle, *De Mirabilis auscult.* 135). So we are looking at an example of unfair exchange, followed by a colonial process that intro-

duced the natives to training in the techniques of mineral extraction and, like every colonial system, used the indigenous infrastructure to the benefit of the metropolis.

For once archaeology confirms this trafficking in the hinterland of Gadir and places such activity in a firm spatial and temporal frame: the mountainous country inland in the provinces of Huelva and Seville between approximately 750 and 570 BC.

In the period of Phoenician colonization, the mining region *par excellence* consisted of the province of Huelva and the western region of the province of Seville, with secondary centres in the Sierra Morena and Portugal. But it was the region of Huelva that contained the richest deposits of pyrites with an abundance of gold and silver ore. So, for example, in the area of the Rio Tinto mines, considered one of the main centres of metal production in antiquity – gold, silver, copper, lead, iron – a mining settlement was established in the seventh century BC – Cerro Salomón – devoted entirely to extracting silver, gold and copper (Fig. 71). The extraction process used native labour, as can be inferred from the archaeological record, and the local population took charge, not only of the digging of pits and galleries but also of smelting operations and processing the ore.

In Cerro Salomón, clay lamps, miners' tools, bellows and crucibles have been discovered, and analyses carried out on samples of ore indicate that the technicians and operators knew a great deal about silica fluxes and how to treat the ore by adding lead to collect the silver. So we are dealing with a well-organized mining enterprise using advanced technology previously unknown in Tartessos. It is not by chance that all this activity in Rio Tinto began at the same time as the first traces of a Phoenician presence appear in the region.

The metal was transported in the form of ingots or crude ore down the Tinto to Huelva, a native or Tartessian settlement which, as a result of this trade, was transformed in the seventh century BC into a prosperous port, frequented by the Phoenicians. Within the town of Huelva, furnaces for smelting silver, dating to the eighth to seventh centuries BC, have been located (Fig. 72), a sign that genuine metallurgical activities for refining the silver from Rio Tinto took place anywhere – close to the mines (Cerro Salomón), in specialized metallurgical centres or in Huelva itself, depending perhaps on fuel requirements or the need to save transport costs.

Moreover, a second minero-metallurgical centre existed which specialized in obtaining and processing silver and was oriented more

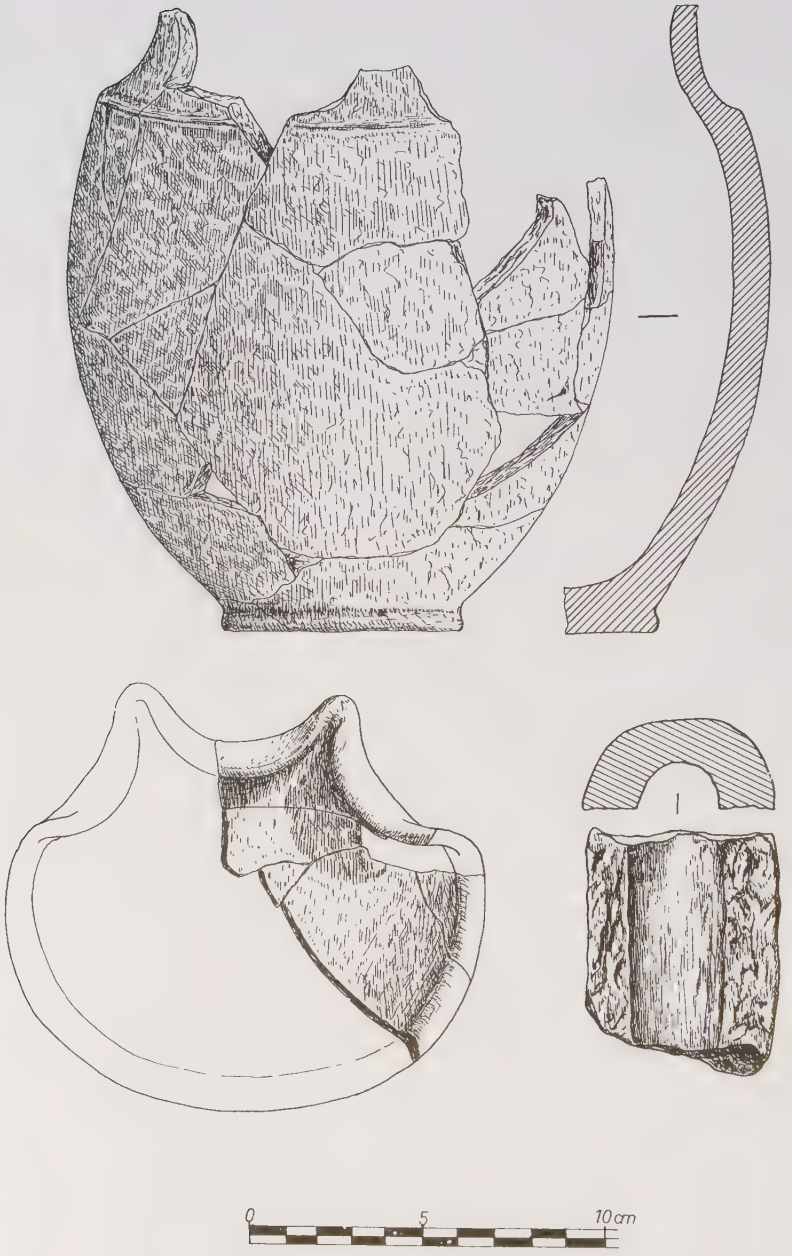


Fig. 71 Pot and mining tools from Rio Tinto

Fig. 72 Tartessian silver-smelting furnace in the calle del Puerto, Huelva

towards the port of Gadir. It was organized around the mines of Aznalcóllar in the province of Seville and was dominated by the important native township of Tejada la Vieja, which controlled the trade route to the mouth of the Guadalquivir and Gadir (see Fig. 68). The metallurgical activity is documented from the end of the eighth century in the metal-working villages of San Bartolomé de Almonte and Peñalosa, situated some kilometres from the mines and devoted exclusively to processing the ore, which was transported to the coast, where it must have arrived already smelted in the form of bars or ingots.

The archaeological evidence for Huelvan metallurgy during the eighth and seventh centuries reveals the existence of a highly efficient organization for production in Phoenician and indigenous hands, intertwined with a hierarchical network of establishments dependent on the Tartessian port of Huelva. The introduction by the Phoenicians of technological innovations into the indigenous metallurgy, which had a long tradition in the region, going back to the Final Bronze Age, had increased the output of the local mines and metal workers, which reached industrial proportions in the seventh century. Everything indicates that the control and supply of silver were in native hands; from the great fortified centres of the interior like Tejada, they coordinated

every facet of production, from the extraction of the ore in the mines of Rio Tinto and Aznalcóllar, to the work of smelting and cupellation in the centres of San Bartolomé and Peñalosa. The ultimate destination of the smelted silver – the ports of Huelva and Gadir – was the culmination of a process of production and distribution from which both the Phoenicians in Gadir and the indigenous elites in Huelva profited.

The technique used at Huelva and San Bartolomé de Almonte for processing silver was based on fusion and cupellation, using basically gossan ore with a high gold, silver and lead content. The process consisted in placing the crushed ore together with the flux, and heating it so as to obtain the slag and the regulus (lead, silver and gold), the lead serving to capture the metals. After this first phase of fusion came the cupellation proper; the regulus was placed in a cupel and fired; the cupel absorbed the lead, releasing a second regulus (gold and silver) and finally separating the lead from it.

All this reveals an excellent knowledge of metallurgy, particularly significant if we bear in mind that the Tartessians had only been initiated into silver metallurgy on a large scale from the eighth century BC. Of course, all these processes demanded the presence of specialist personnel – technicians, miners, metallurgists, transport workers – in charge of the various stages of production, since we have already seen that the ore was not always extracted in the place where it was smelted or put aboard ship. Probably the metal was transported in the form of ingots or bars, previously weighed and divided up, from the ports of Huelva or Gadir direct to Tyre or Greece, and perhaps even to Pitecusas or other Mediterranean centres where we have documentary evidence of the activity of silver- and goldsmiths during the eighth to seventh centuries BC.

In any case, Gadir was the principal reception centre for Tartessian silver, either through middlemen or directly, at least until the end of the seventh century BC. It can be said on this score that the capital invested by Tyre in this remote enterprise was more than repaid, because only high economic returns can explain the eccentric location of Gadir, outside the normal shipping routes of the ancient Mediterranean. What is more, the traffic in silver ore that we have just described implies, in addition to considerable economic investment, a high degree of coordination between the mine and the wharf, and the existence of an authority to centralize and coordinate those services. Given that the chief beneficiary was Tyre, we are bound to think, as

the classical sources (Diodorus 5:35, 5) insinuate, that Gadir was acting under orders from Tyre by way of powerful commercial agents installed in the west. Only so does Posidonius' observation that there were in Gadir great transport ships, commissioned by the rich traders of the place (Strabo 2:3, 4) and operating in safety under the protection of Melqart, make sense. Thanks to them, Tyre was able to supply the great centres of the Aegean and Assyria with silver.

The silver trade benefited a sector of the Tartessian population of Huelva as well, especially the local chiefs and kinglets. whose power is perfectly reflected in the aristocratic burials in the necropolis of La Joya (Fig. 73). The content of the tombs not only indicates that the local chiefs were adopting forms of Phoenician and other oriental influence in their lifestyle and funerary practices – hence the term 'orientalizing' applied to this period in Tartessos – but also that throughout the seventh century social differentiation was increasing at the heart of these indigenous communities, preparing to some extent for the social and economic changes that would result in the crisis in the Tartessian world in the middle of the sixth century BC.

The direct intervention of Gadir in silver production and her monopoly of the trade in the Mediterranean increased throughout the seventh century BC, at points in time when the great demand for silver in the east was forcing Tyre to intensify her silver production in the west, and therefore to consolidate trading relations with the indigenous world. This is the time when the volume of commercial exchanges with Andalusia, Estremadura and Portugal increased and their inhabitants received oil, wine, unguents and jewels in exchange for their raw materials.

Trade with the Tartessian hinterland – an example of unfair exchange

The Tartessian area is today one of the best-known territories archaeologically, thanks to the boom that field of investigation has experienced since the beginning of the 1970s. Without going into considerations of its material culture and its historical or protohistorical development, which would require a separate volume to itself, it is interesting to stress here the incidence of Phoenician trade in the Guadalquivir valley and adjoining regions and the forms of exchange developed in the region.

The Guadalquivir valley offers several possibilities for metallurgical exploitation which could effectively complement the production of

Fig. 73 Bronze jug from the necropolis of La Joya, Huelva

silver in Huelva province. An examination of all the archaeological data demonstrates that Phoenician trade made its way into the valley during the eighth to seventh centuries BC and into the spurs of the Sierra Morena – Carambolo, Setefilla, Cástulo – where it could obtain silver, gold, siderite, copper and lead with relative ease.

As the mainland harbour of Gadir, Castillo de Doña Blanca gave easy access straight into the fertile valley of the Guadalquivir and to its mouth, which in antiquity was an enormous lagoon, peopled with indigenous coastal settlements like Asta Regia, Nabrissa, Onoba and Ossonoba. The majority of these villages, like the great Tartessian centres of the interior, Carmona, Carambolo, Seville itself and Setefilla, received Phoenician goods very early on, more than half of which consisted of transport amphorae and containers. This would confirm the observations of the Pseudo-Aristotle that we have already commented on, namely that, in the beginning, the Tartessians received oil and gewgaws in exchange for metals.

In addition to metals, the Phoenicians could not have overlooked the agricultural and livestock potential of the Guadalquivir valley. Although information about this aspect is exceedingly sparse, the distribution and form of the Phoenician pottery and amphorae found in the interior of Gadir indicate that the star items of Phoenician trade were habitually grain, metals, salt, hides and probably slaves as well. Although difficult to verify on an archaeological level, the slave trade was considered to be one of the pillars of the Tyrian economy (Amos 1:9; Herod. 2:54–55).

What did the natives get in exchange for all this? Assuredly oil and probably also quality wine, judging by the huge quantity of remains of Phoenician amphorae found in the Tartessian villages in the provinces of Huelva, Cadiz and Seville (Fig. 74). The volume of oil imported into Tartessian territory argues for the presence of professional merchants, devoting themselves to transporting amphorae from the great centres of oil production in the eighth to seventh centuries BC, such as Byblos and Sarepta. During the seventh century BC, the Phoenicians also transported quality oil produced in Attica to the west, using small luxury amphorae – the 'SOS' amphorae – of Greek manufacture (Fig. 75).

The archaeological record also throws light on all kinds of merchandise and articles that the Phoenicians introduced into the territories of the interior, such as decorated pieces of ivory, imported from the east or made in workshops in Gadir, gold and silver jewellery,

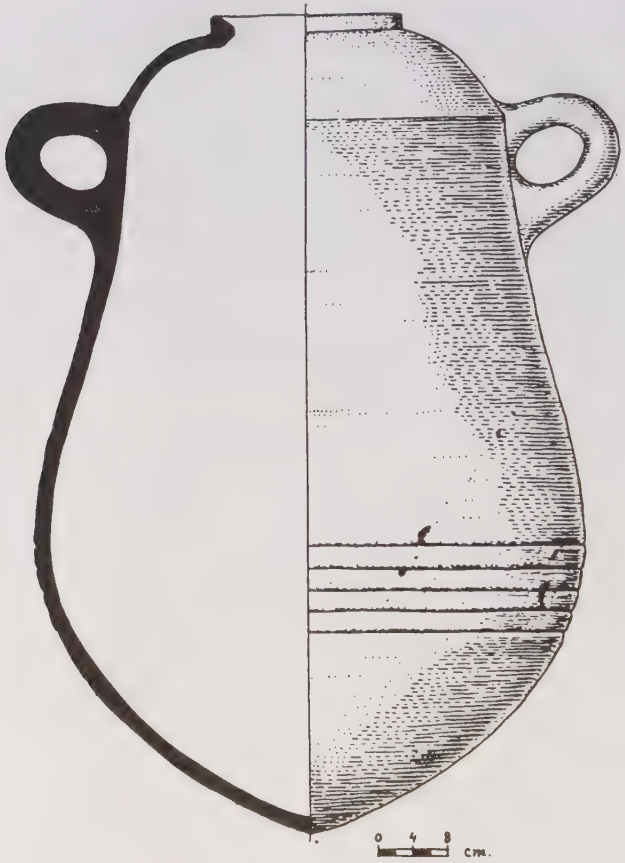


Fig. 74 Phoenician amphora from El Carambolo (seventh century BC)

bronze jugs and, most of all, a great profusion of small receptacles – arryballoi, alabaster vases, bottles and flasks – which contained perfumed oils, essences, balms and cosmetics; there were also textiles, necklaces, glass beads and other trinkets (see below, Fig. 83). In short, a typically colonial system of trade existed, based on the production of genuine articles for 'export' – vases for unguents and perfumes – which, to judge by their wide distribution in Andalusia, can be considered as one of the successes of Phoenician trade, in that they were able to create a demand for small luxury articles where there was none before.

To the unequal exchange typical of the initial stages of colonial

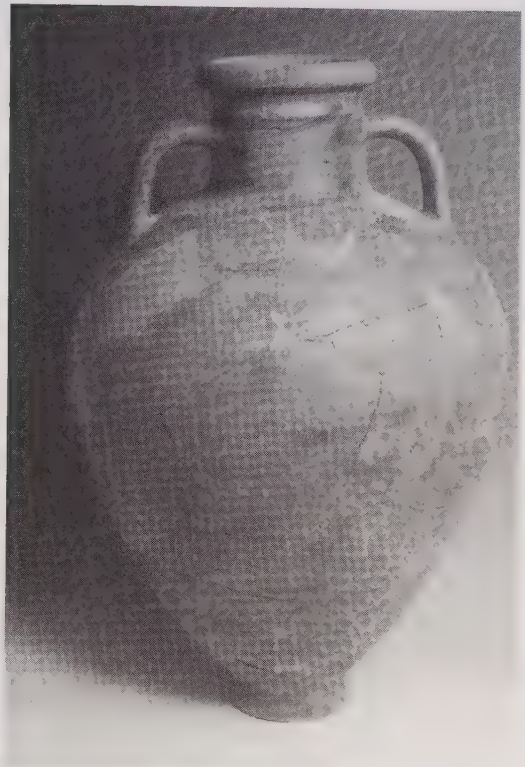


Fig. 75 Greek 'SOS'-type amphora from Cerro del Villar, Malaga (seventh century BC)

trade must be added a second system of exchange based on the circulation of prestige objects in the framework of the Tartessian elites of the interior. A series of luxury and prestige objects, such as jewels, ivories, bronze statuettes representing Astarte, cut glass and bronze jugs, were destined for the Tartessian elite (Fig. 76). The concentration of luxury goods or prestige gifts in strategic areas like Huelva, Carmona, Carambolo, Setefilla, Aliseda and Cástulo, and forming part of princely grave goods, shows Gadir's interest in the peoples who controlled the main communication and access routes to the mineral and agricultural resources of the interior. The exchange of gifts thus constituted one of the mechanisms used by Phoenician trade to attain its economic objectives. So a constant feature of Phoenician trade in Lower Andalusia was the system of reciprocity, which appears to be restricted to the privileged sector of Tartessian society. And the

Fig. 76 Astarte. Bronze statuette, El Carambolo (eighth century BC)

exchange of silver, copper and tin for wine, oil and perfumes is an indication of unequal power and a typically colonial situation, rather than one of developed trade.

This situation of unequal exchange would tend to have important repercussions: social change at the heart of the indigenous society as soon as only certain sectors of the population are incorporated and benefit from the Phoenician trading circuit, and a gradual depletion of the resources of the territory.

Tartessian archaeology is richly eloquent about the mechanisms used by Phoenician colonial trade in the zones of preferential economic interest. Thus the evidence suggests that Tyrian trade benefited only the local aristocracy, which had controlled an area rich in agricultural and minero-metallurgical resources since long before the founding of Gadir and which contrived to exploit a favourable economic opportunity, cashing in on the concentration in its territory of raw materials and resources so greatly valued in the Mediterranean world of the eighth and seventh centuries BC. Acting like veritable economic

and social middlemen, the Phoenicians managed to integrate Tartessian society, and in particular its ruling elites, into the structural framework of the 'civilized' and market societies characteristic of the eastern Mediterranean, transforming them into organized forms of political power and consumers of imported luxury goods.

Rather than an 'acculturation' phenomenon or a consequence of Phoenician 'agrarian colonization' of the Guadalquivir valley, as some authors have claimed, the Tartessian 'orientalizing' phenomenon was first and foremost the response of a hierarchized indigenous society, firmly in control of its own resources, to the Mediterranean colonial stimulus. It was a response that took the form of an ideological and social integration of the dominant sectors of Tartessian society into Mediterraneo-eastern social structures, and the incorporation of their economic systems into the market circuits of the Mediterranean basin.

In any case, the Tartessian example demonstrates that the Phoenician colonial and commercial enterprise set up preferential exchange networks in those territories that already had an established political authority, capable of guaranteeing surplus production, stability and continuity of exchange, and of furnishing a native labour force in the mines, farms and merchant ports. Probably the temple at Gadir, the symbol of the Phoenician state, served as guarantor in the pacts and alliances signed with local native chiefs, ensuring, on the one hand that trade functioned smoothly and reinforcing the social status of the elites on the other.

ATLANTIC TRADE

The Atlantic region of the Iberian Peninsula

Gadir's radius of economic action widened considerably during the seventh century BC. Thus, her control of the minero-metallurgical resources very soon extended to a new metal, tin, clearly in short supply in the eastern Mediterranean

The story goes that from far off times the Tartessians, and the Phoenicians too, sailed to the isles of the Oestrymnides in search of tin (Avienus *O.M.* 113–116). And Strabo adds that the Gaditanians obtained tin and lead in the Cassiteride Isles in exchange for salt and bronze objects (Strabo 3:5, 11).

Generally speaking, the Oestrymnides or Cassiterides ('tin islands') were located opposite the coast of Galicia, in Brittany or even the

British Isles (Pliny *Nat. Hist.* 4:119). Be that as it may, it seems likely that the Tartessians from Huelva developed regular contacts by sea with the northwest of the Peninsula during the Final Atlantic Bronze Age and signs of regular Phoenician shipping are noted all along the Portuguese coast from the mid-seventh century BC.

Gadir must also have used the overland route, which gave access to the tin of the northwest via Tartessos, passing through the strategic enclaves of Aliseda and Medellín, through a land – Estremadura – rich in gold, copper and tin. The famous Aliseda treasure (Cáceres), undoubtedly the work of Phoenician goldsmiths, was in fact found in the burial of an indigenous chief or prince whose residence probably controlled one of the main natural corridors of the tin route to the northwest. The contents of the burial – gold jewels, bronze and silver jugs, Phoenician amphorae – testify to the practice of gifts or presents, offered by Gaditanian or Tartessian merchants to a native chief in return for an economic benefit: the free transit of merchandise through his territory.

The recent archaeological discoveries in the central southern zone of Portugal and adjoining areas have made the importance of Iberia's Atlantic face for the commercial policy of Gadir in the seventh century quite clear; her sphere of influence reached previously unexplored territories, like the Tagus estuary, Atlantic Morocco and also the Balearics and the Golfe du Lion.

Indeed, rather more than a hundred years after the arrival of the Phoenicians in the bay of Cadiz and on the Mediterranean coast of Andalusia, and maybe as a consequence of the strong demand for raw materials and products derived from agriculture and livestock by the Mediterranean centres, the Gaditanian merchants around 650 BC found themselves in a position to hazard their ships into regions unexplored till then, or integrated into other trading circuits – clearly in recession at the time, like the so-called 'Atlantic Bronze' – whose extraordinary resources of tin, gold, ivory, copper, lead and salt more than justified the widening of their western exchange areas.

From the Final Bronze Age (1100–700 BC), the indigenous communities of southern Portugal were organized around great fortified strategic townships which, like Alpiarça, Catujal, Tapada de Ajuda and Quinta do Almaraz in the Tagus delta, dominated the estuaries of the main Atlantic rivers (Fig. 77). The archaeological evidence suggests that the local elites, from a position in the central townships, controlled not only communications with the interior but long-distance seaborne trade with other European Atlantic regions and a series of

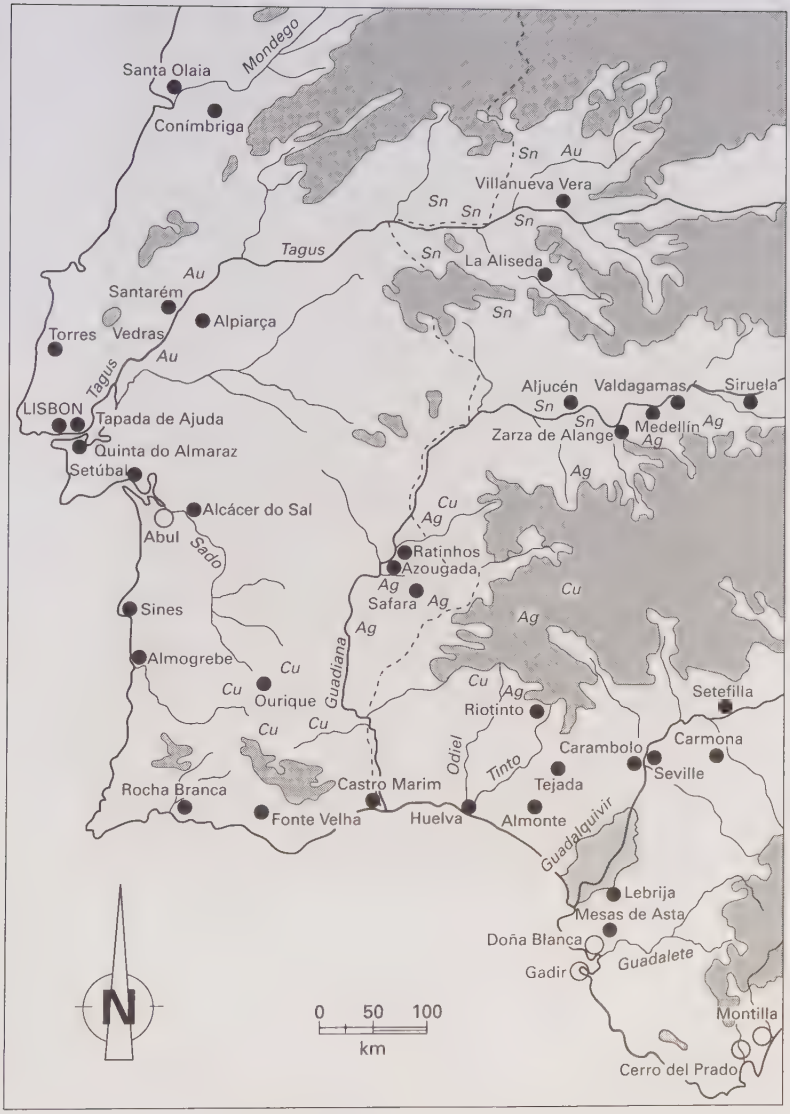


Fig. 77 South-central Portugal and Estremadura

Fig. 78 Mouth of the bronze jug from Zarza de Alange

dependent farming and minero-metallurgical units lying in the interior of the territory.

From the eighth century on, the presence is noted of important townships sited in high places, with good defensive conditions and dominating the main communication routes, like the Guadiana, the Sado, the Tagus and the Mondego. These were genuine native trading ports, like Castro Marim, Quinta do Almaraz, Sé de Lisbon, Alcaçova de Santarém, Setubal, Alcáçer do Sal, Conimbriga and Santa Olaia, which channelled copper from Alentejo, tin from Beira Alta and gold from Portuguese Estremadura to the coast. A significant example is provided by the township of Castro Marim which, from the beginning

Fig. 79 Bronze jug from Siruela

of the first millennium, controlled regional trade and access to the middle course of the Guadiana, where the presence of 'orientalizing' necropolises and 'princely' burials – Aljucén, Zarza de Alange (Figs. 78 and 79), Medellín, Valdegamas or Siruela – or of central sanctuary–residences like Cancho Roano, testifies to the importance of the communities in the plains of the Guadiana for supplying tin, copper and silver to the coast. The interest of Gaditanian trade in these indigenous coastal centres in the mid-seventh century stemmed no doubt from their standing as intermediaries between the coast and the interior, their control of merchant traffic by river and their role as potential consumers of prestige goods from the Phoenician area.

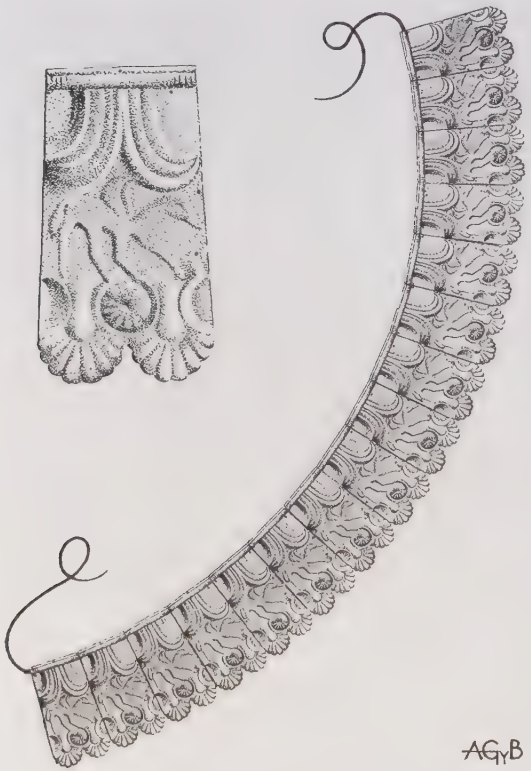


Fig. 80 The Gaio Treasure at Sines

The lavish contents of some of the Iron Age Portuguese necropolises like Fonte Velha, Almogrebe and Alcácer do Sal, combined with the 'princely' nature of the burials at Gaio, in Sines, and at Torres Vedras, with their Phoenician luxury imports (Fig. 80), underlines the strategic and political importance of the indigenous elites in the Gaditanian exchange networks.

On the estuary of the Tagus, the biggest river of the Peninsula and famous for its gold-bearing sands (Pliny *Nat. Hist.* 4, 115), a dense, eminently agricultural population appears to be organized in the seventh and sixth centuries around big central townships dominating the river; through them passed the chief exchange products from the interior, like salt, alluvial gold, tin, silver and copper. The abundance and unmistakably Andalusian origin of the imported Phoenician

pottery appearing in Quinta do Almaraz, in the heart of Lisbon, and in Alcáçova de Santarém, speak of the importance of the Tagus route for Phoenician trade; the luxury goods that appear in the seventh and sixth centuries in the sanctuaries and princely tombs belonging to the rural elites of the regions of Cáceres (Aliseda, Villanueva de la Vera, Torrejón de Abajo) and Toledo (Las Fraguas, Casa del Carpio) were probably brought to the interior by this trade.

On the Sado estuary, the cremation necropolis of Alcácer do Sal and the township of Setubal have yielded imported Phoenician pottery very similar to that from Lixus and Mogador. Probably the only Phoenician trading post so far known in Portugal is documented in this area, the post of Abul. This is a small, fortified commercial enclave of the seventh century, lying close to the mouth of the river and occupied, on the basis of the Phoenician pottery, between the middle of the seventh and the beginning of the sixth centuries (Fig. 81). The type and form of the pottery – amphorae, grey ware, red slip ware, *pithoi* and painted pieces – point directly to the world of the Phoenician colonies in Andalusia and define the southern origin of its settlers, established on one of the most important access routes to the interior in Portugal.

The most northerly archaeological traces of a Phoenician presence that we know of come from the Mondego valley, and in particular the indigenous hill forts of Conimbriga and Santa Olaia, which, from the Final Bronze Age, controlled the circuits supplying metal in the region, symbolized by the famous deposit of bronzes at Baiões. The imported materials that appear in this zone from the seventh century – grey ware, red glazed plates, Carmona-type ivories, Cruz del Negro urns and double-spring fibulae – reflect regular contacts, not only with the Gaditanian area but also with the Tartessian lower Guadalquivir.

Atlantic Morocco: Lixus and Mogador

The classical sources mention that the Gaditanians sailed in big ships throughout the Mediterranean and the Atlantic Ocean and that, beyond the Straits of Gibraltar, there was a host of Tyrian colonies on the Moroccan coasts of the Atlantic, which subsequently became uninhabited and ruined (Strabo 3:1, 8; 18:3, 2; Avienus *O.M.* 438–442 and 459–460). Indeed, it is known that the Phoenicians of Gadir used to sail beyond the Columns and in four days arrived at places abounding in shoals of tuna; they fished off the coasts of Mauritania as far as the river Lixus with small boats known as *hippoi*

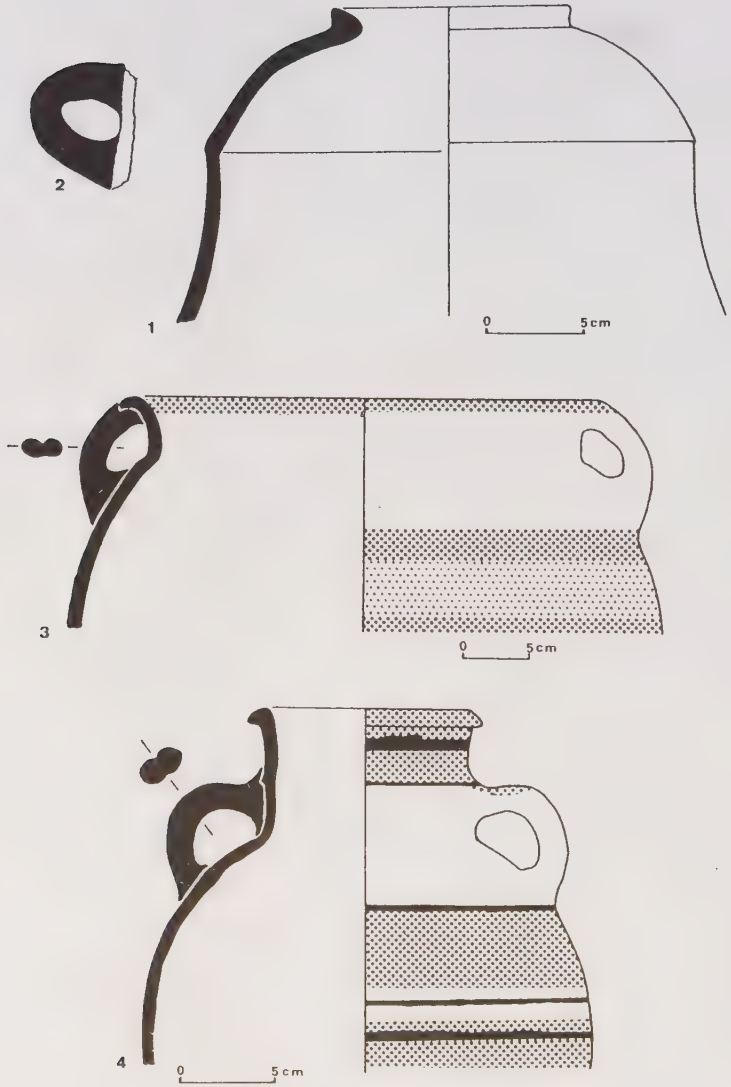


Fig. 81 Phoenician pottery from Abul

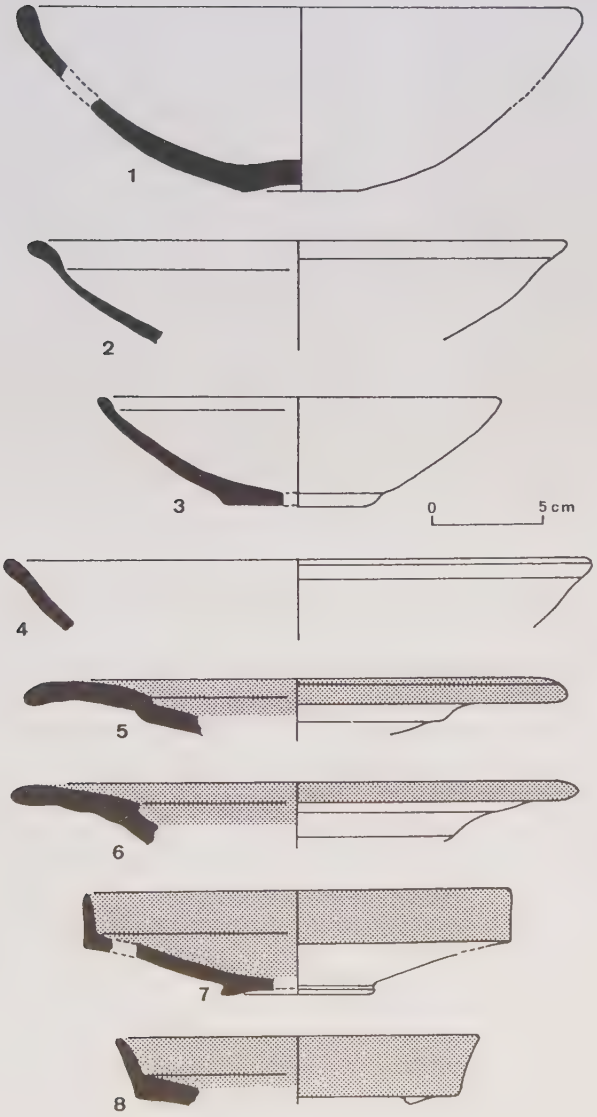


Fig. 81 (cont.)

Fig. 82 View of the acropolis at Lixus

because of the figurehead in the form of a horse on the prow (Pseudo-Aristotle, 136; Strabo 2:3, 4). This is probably a reference to the Canary–Saharan shoals of fish, which even today are among the richest in the world.

The most important Phoenician installation in the area was Lixus, situated on a hill dominating the fertile valley of the river Loukkos, close to its mouth (Fig. 82). Although this Phoenician settlement was thought to be very ancient (Pliny *Nat. Hist.* 19:63), it has furnished very little archaeological documentation from the Phoenician period. It was an important Hellenistic and Roman city, with monumental temples that have so far yielded only a limited amount of ancient material from the seventh century BC as the sole evidence of the original Phoenician outpost, so we know very little about its extent and layout.

Nevertheless, what the Phoenicians were seeking was not just deep-sea fishing. The site of Lixus on the mouth of the Loukkos made the colony into a well-sheltered harbour at the entrance to one of the great navigable rivers of the Atlantic, an important consideration on an inhospitable coastline like that of Morocco, which was exceedingly dangerous to shipping and where, apart from Tangier, there were hardly any sheltered beaches or inlets; important because in the hin-

terland of Lixus were powerful native kingdoms from which the Phoenicians were able to obtain ivory and gold. Lixus had access likewise to copper, iron and lead in the spurs of the Atlas mountains, and deposits of salt in the Sahara and the Banasa region.

The earliest finds so far documented in Lixus match pottery from stratum V of the sondage carried out by Tarradell in 1951–55 in the area called after the 'Algarrobo', and from the excavations by Ponisch and Tarradell in the temple zone, where important assemblages of Phoenician ceramics appeared in the lower levels under building A, temple H and in a cistern.

The amphorae, as well as the red-glazed plates and bowls, the bottles and the big, four-handled jars known as *pithoi*, point directly to the late seventh- and sixth-century Phoenician pottery from the Gaditanian bay – in particular from Doña Blanca – and from Tartessian sites in the interior like Carambolo and Cruz del Negro. Yet again, as in Portugal, the strong influence of Gadir in the ancient horizon of the Atlantic colonies is clear, forming a kind of Gaditanian 'cultural province' in the far west.

The little island of Mogador, 1000 km away from Cadiz, housed another small Phoenician establishment, frequented sporadically during the seventh to sixth centuries BC. This is the most southerly Phoenician outpost known so far, lying on an island facing the mainland which formed part of an ancient archipelago now almost vanished. Its siting, opposite the mouth of a rather unimportant river, the Wadi Ksob, seems to indicate a small trading post or temporary commercial establishment probably used by merchants from the east for their sporadic dealings with the populations of the interior of the continent.

Mogador has not furnished solid dwelling structures, only remains of hearths and paving more suited to a temporary encampment of stalls or shacks. The remains of whale and fish found in the excavations indicate that trade went hand in hand with fishing activities.

A particularly interesting find in Mogador was a large square stone slab that has been interpreted as a cult monolith. Whatever the case, it is reminiscent of the stelae the Phoenicians were wont to erect in some regions of the Mediterranean, like Nora, to commemorate the founding of a colony or trading post, or the famous *padrões* that the first Portuguese merchants in the fifteenth century left as a sign that they had stopped over in their voyages along the west coast of Africa. A *padrão* was a column topped with a stone cube bearing the arms of the king of Portugal, symbolizing the appropriation of a new territory.

The pottery from Mogador (Fig. 83), consisting of Phoenician red-slip plates, grey bowls, lamps, tripods, *pithoi*, Cruz del Negro-type vessels, a few receptacles with burnished reticular decoration, eastern Greek pottery and Attic 'SOS' amphorae, is entirely in keeping with this Atlantic 'cultural province' dependent on Gadir and its immediate hinterland. Consequently, this is not a trading post founded by Carthage, as was said at first, but an integral part of the overseas dominions of Cadiz.

Perhaps it was the famous Cerne mentioned in the *Periplus* of the Pseudo-Scilax, an island off Africa where tradition describes a situation very similar to that reflected in the archaeological record of Mogador. Indeed, according to the *Periplus*, in Cerne the Phoenician merchants carried on sporadic and seasonal trading, sheltered in their booths and offloaded their merchandise on the mainland in exchange for hides and ivory. Of disputed chronology, the Pseudo-Scilax's *Periplus* is probably alluding to events in the early sixth century and constitutes one of the most eloquent demonstrations of the exchange mechanisms the Phoenicians may have used in those territories where they could not rely on permanent colonies (Scilax 112; Müller *GGM* 1, 94):

> Beyond the island of Cerne it is impossible to sail because of the shallowness of the sea, the mud and the algae . . . The traders are Phoenician. When they arrive at the island of Cerne, they anchor their cargo ships [*gauloi*] and set up stalls in Cerne. But after they have unloaded the cargo from their ships, they carry it in small boats to the mainland. The Ethiopians are found on the mainland. It is with these same Ethiopians that they trade. [The Phoenicians] sell [their wares] in exchange for the skins of gazelles, lions and leopards and also for skins and tusks of elephants and domestic animals. The Phoenician traders bring them unguents, Egyptian stone, Attic dishes and 'coes'. Indeed, these are the forms that can be acquired during the feasts of the Coes. These Ethiopians eat meat, drink milk and make wine in abundance from their own vines, although the Phoenicians bring it as well. [The Ethiopians] also have a great city to which the Phoenician traders also sail.

Mogador is interesting to us chiefly for its pottery, the best known aspect of these Phoenician outposts in the Atlantic.

The name of Magon (*mgn*) is significant; it appears incised as a mark of ownership on amphorae and Phoenician ceramics from the island. It is probably connected with a rich trader or seafarer from Gadir, belonging to the same social circles as the other Magón who was buried at Almuñécar with all his belongings and luxury possessions.

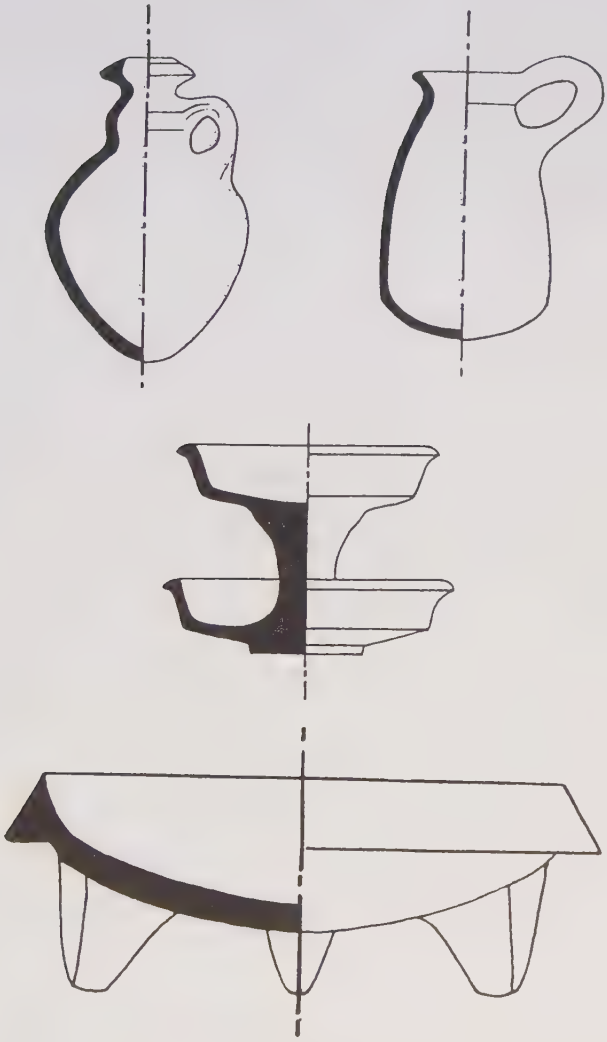


Fig. 83 Phoenician pottery from Mogador (seventh century BC)

Overseas, the orbit of the commercial and fishing activity of Cadiz was not restricted to Lixus, Mogador and the Cassiterites. This can be inferred from the existence of two small settlements located at Rachgoun and Mersa Madakh in Oran, where the archaeological remains once more evoke the Gadir–Doña Blanca circuit in the seventh and sixth centuries BC. Probably these enclaves, devoted to commerce and fishing, acted as supply points for shipping making for Cadiz and the Straits of Gibraltar.

10

The colonies in the west

II. MEDITERRANEAN ANDALUSIA AND IBIZA

The colonies of eastern Andalusia

Introduction

In this section we shall set about analysing a coastal stretch lying roughly between Villaricos (Almería) and the river Guadiaro (Malaga), occupied by Phoenician settlements, knowledge of which has been one of the biggest surprises of Phoenician archaeology in recent times. Indeed, this region, like Ibiza, was practically unknown to classical historiography and even erroneously linked by a few classical authors to Greek or Carthaginian colonization; yet today it constitutes one of the most spectacular and ancient archaeological clusters known in the western Mediterranean and its discovery has given an unexpected turn to the study of the Phoenicians in the west.

The sources of information here are different from those for Gadir: in order to reconstruct the history of the Phoenician colonies on the Mediterranean coast of Andalusia or on Ibiza, we must of necessity have recourse to the archaeological evidence, given that the written sources generally ignore those territories before the Punic and Carthaginian period.

The wealth of archaeological documentation recorded at some of the sites like Toscanos, or the sumptuous nature of the Phoenician necropolises at Trayamar or Almuñécar have occasionally led to the importance of these Phoenician establishments being exaggerated, a product of the fascination exerted by the Phoenician archaeology of the provinces of Malaga and Granada, and also of overlooking the cultural and economic weight of Gadir in Andalusia and the Atlantic. This may explain some of the hypotheses that see in Gadir a mere commercial trading post, while Toscanos and other Mediterranean

Fig. 84 The Phoenician colonies in eastern Andalusia (●○) and the Final Bronze Age indigenous settlements (▲)

enclaves would have been the real Tyrian colonies of the Iberian Peninsula.

The classical historians prove very vague when describing this region, considered until a few years ago to have been colonized by the Carthaginians and in any case after 500 BC. Strabo affirms that Malaka (Malaga), the city of the Saxitani (Sexi in Almuñécar), and Abdera (Adra) were Phoenician foundations (3:4, 2–3), while other authors stress that this coastal region between Malaga and Almería was crowded with Phoenicians in former times (Avienus *O.M.* 440; 459–460). Since Malaka and Abdera were also called Libyo-Phoenician, that is, African Phoenician (Carthaginian), this territory was long considered to be a province of the Punic or Carthaginian period.

Nowadays, the first thing we notice in the coastal region between Malaga and Almería is a great concentration of early Phoenician settlers, organized in small cities or ports that dominate the deltas of the main rivers in the provinces of Cadiz, Malaga, Granada and Almería (Fig. 84). These eastern people settled down in the region for some 200 years (roughly between 770 and 550 BC), so we need have no hesitation in speaking of genuine colonization throughout the eighth and seventh centuries BC.

Some of these installations were hardly more than half an hour's walking distance apart and the distance from one centre to the next is, on average, from 1 to 4 km as the crow flies. It is not easy to determine the causes or objectives of such a high population density. Their relationship with Gadir is difficult to assess and their possible commercial function in relation to the metals of the interior is dubious. We have seen (Chapter 6) that maritime factors could oblige any craft making for Cadiz to drop anchor on this precise stretch of coast. But those factors alone do not justify a density of such stable and permanent Phoenician installations in that zone.

The diachronic sequence of the first colonial foundations

The archaeological record states that, from the mid-eighth century BC, groups of Phoenician population gradually established themselves along this coastal stretch of the provinces of Malaga, Granada and Almería. Around the years 580 to 550 BC, some of these centres were abandoned. The conventional chronological sequence established for the Phoenician pottery – in particular the red-slip plates and jugs (see below Fig. 92) – dated thanks to Greek imports, fixes the starting

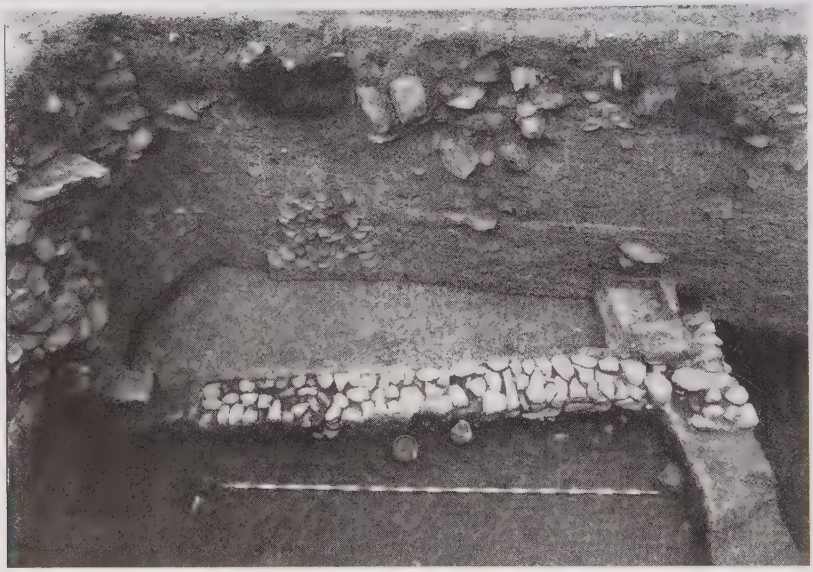


Fig. 85 Dwellings in the B1 Phoenician level at Morro de Mezquitilla

point of this commercial presence around the middle of the eighth century BC, when the settlement of Morro de Mezquitilla was founded on the banks of the Algarrobo. Just as in the bay of Cadiz, or at Carthage and in Sardinia, the earliest datings, based on the presence of Greek imports, invariably point to the first half or the middle of the eighth century as the initial date for the arrival of the first Phoenician colonists in the west. The conventional carbon 14 dates obtained in Andalusia seem to confirm these dates upwards, although new radiometric calibrations and certain incompatibilities between the pottery datings of the east and the west may in future oblige the chronology of the Phoenician diaspora in the Mediterranean to be revised (see Appendix III).

The settlement at Morro is, together with Carthage, Sulcis and Doña Blanca, one of the earliest Phoenician colonies in the west (Fig. 85). The Phoenician pottery from its earliest levels is in keeping with a production still closely linked to the east, that is to say to the pottery of levels V/IV and III/II at Tyre and to level 5 at Tell Keisan. These affinities become especially clear through the presence at Morro of a very fine red-slip ware (Fig. 86), traditionally known as 'Samarian pottery' or 'fine ware', which would date the start of the colony to the middle

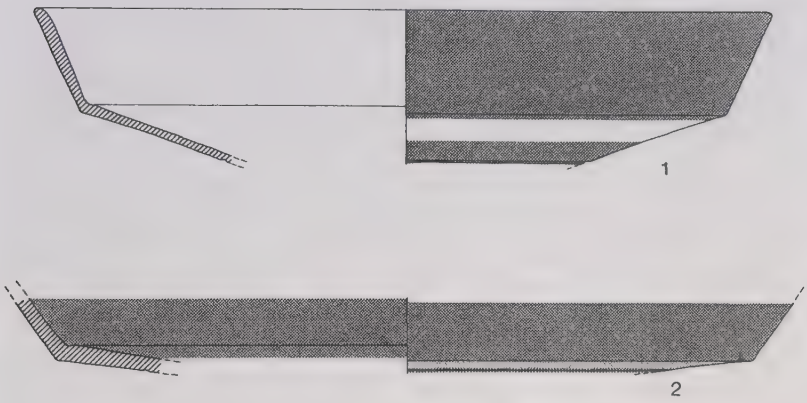


Fig. 86 Imported Phoenician pottery of the 'Samaria' type from Morro de Mezquitilla

or the second half of the eighth century. A recent revision by Maass-Lindemann of the earliest pottery types – the ones that correspond to level B1 at Morro – shows that purely western formal variants existed from the outset in Phoenician pottery, which suggests that the earliest horizon represented by the first occupation levels at Morro was not the most ancient in the far west of the Mediterranean. Whatever the case, the first arrival of Phoenicians in the west seems to have occurred simultaneously at Sulcis, Carthage, on the Malaga coastline and in the bay of Cadiz.

The archaeological evidence shows a small port installation at Morro, and judging by the category and the luxury of the earliest dwellings relatively high-ranking eastern people may have lived there – merchants, perhaps, or businessmen – together with artisans and metallurgists who operated in accordance with the internal needs of the population. The find of a district of metal workshops in the south-west of the settlement does not just indicate the industrial and mercantile character of these first trading posts, it reveals, too, the existence of one of the most ancient iron metallurgies known in western Europe.

The majority of the Phoenician enclaves, however, seem to have arisen in the second half of the eighth century BC; this is true of Toscanos, Chorreras, Cerro del Villar, Montilla, Abdera and Almuñécar. Within this group, the relative chronology of the pottery finds suggests that their foundation was staggered over the period

750–700 BC, and we are aware of several successive stages in the Phoenician colonization which, until a few years ago, was thought to be a unitary and synchronous process. For reasons that are not very clear, the process was interrupted in some cases, as at Chorreras or in Montilla, and the Phoenician establishment was abandoned around 700.

A third stage in the founding of the Phoenician colonies on the Mediterranean coast must be mentioned. Thus, for example, the materials from the most ancient level at Cerro del Prado – level 3a – on the mouth of the Guadarranque show that this establishment arose in the second half of the seventh century, like other secondary enclaves, founded from the earliest Phoenician colonies. This is also the case for the trading post of Cabecico de Parra, lying inside the Almanzora valley and founded by Baria/Villaricos in the second half of the seventh century in order to exploit the silver, iron and lead ores of the neighbouring mines at Herrerías.

This last phase of ancient foundations coincides with the high point of Gaditanian trade which, at those dates, was extending its sphere of exchanges towards Atlantic Morocco, Portugal, the southeast, Ibiza and the Ebro valley.

The settlement pattern

The topography and distribution of the settlements along the coast from Malaka to Abdera reflect a definite and very homogeneous settlement pattern. All the establishments have in common their location on a low coastal promontory and lie on a small peninsula at the mouth of a river. These characteristics evoke the oldest Phoenician settlement model mentioned in the west: the one described by Thucydides in precolonial Sicily, consisting of a great number of enclaves on islets and coastal promontories for commercial ends (Thucydides 6:2, 6).

There are no traces of Phoenician installations of this type either to the west of Cadiz or between Cadiz and the Straits of Gibraltar. Close to the straits, the first known Phoenician settlement is Cerro del Prado in the bay of Algeciras and on the left bank of the mouth of the Guadarranque. Moving eastward, this is followed by the one at Montilla, on the mouth of the Guadiaro and Cerro del Villar, in the mouth of the river Guadalhorce, the only known case in the region of a Phoenician island settlement. A few kilometres further on, the Phoenician enclave of Malaka dominated the river Guadalmedina at

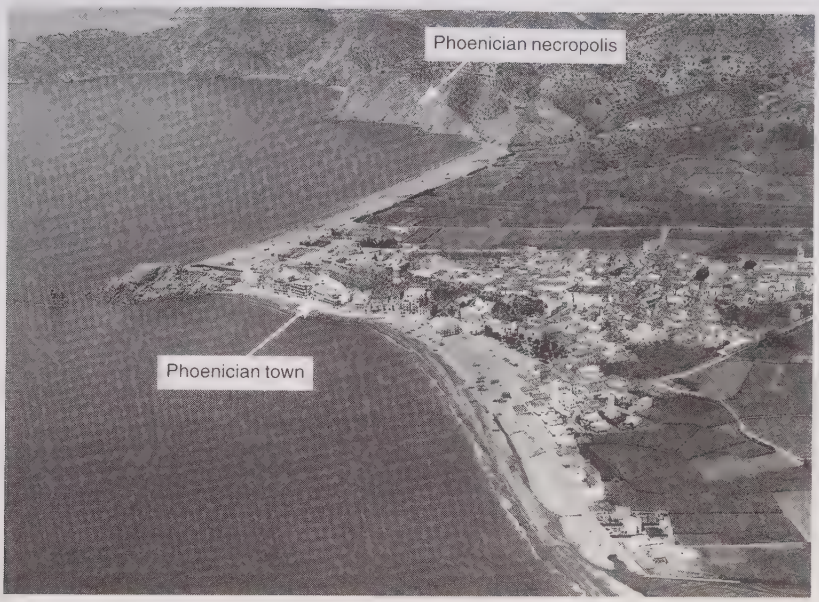


Fig. 87 Aerial view of Almuñécar

its mouth and, a little further on, came Toscanos, on a hill dominating the then wide bay of the river Vélez and, further east, Morro de Mezquitilla and Chorreras on the river Algarrobo. Lastly, on the coast of Granada, Almuñécar, the ancient Sexi, was strikingly situated on the hill of San Miguel and dominating the rivers Verde and Seco (Fig. 87), and in the province of Almería, Adra, ancient Abdera, lay on the right bank of the Adra river, and Villaricos, ancient Baria, at the mouth of the Almanzora.

Many other establishments of this type may have existed and have disappeared as a consequence of the building boom on the Costa del Sol in the 1970s. This can be inferred from a few archaeological finds and the geomorphological studies at Rincón de la Victoria and in the castle at Fuengirola in Malaga province, at the mouth of the river Guadalfeo in Granada province and at the mouth of the Antas in the province of Almería. If this hypothesis is confirmed, and bearing in mind the latest discoveries in the bay of Mazarrón in Cartagena, or at the mouth of the river Segura, in Alicante province (see below, Fig. 103), we shall have to think of a genuine 'Phoenician coastline' from the Straits of Gibraltar to Alicante.

The distances between one Phoenician establishment and another

are surprisingly short. So, for example, between the settlement at Cerro del Villar in the Guadalhorce and the one at Malaka, the distance as the crow flies is 4 km. Toscanos is 7 km away from Morro de Mezquitilla and Chorreras is to be found 800 m from Morro de Mezquitilla. These distances cannot reflect the need for staging posts or bases for coastal shipping, so the reasons for such a concentration of early Phoenician population must be sought elsewhere. It is obvious that, from the strategic point of view of communication routes with the interior and land routes along the coast, the visual connections between one position and another were optimal. So we should speak of compartmentalized control of the coastal territory.

The occupied area and size of these establishments are fairly restricted by comparison with the big Phoenician colonies in Tunis or Sardinia or with Gadir itself (10 ha), Motya (some 40 ha), Kition (70 ha) or Tyre (57 ha). For example the area of Cerro del Prado is estimated at about 1 ha, and that of Cerro del Villar del Guadalhorce at 5 ha. Abdera and Morro de Mezquitilla each occupied some 2 ha and Chorreras about 3 ha. Initially Toscanos covered an area of 2.5 ha and only in the seventh century BC was it extended to cover 12 to 15 ha, including the surrounding defensive enclosures. So these are small installations.

Another feature to be stressed in the pattern of Phoenician settlement on the Mediterranean face of Iberia is the site chosen for the construction of the necropolis. Although we know only four early necropolises – the ones at Toscanos, Morro, Lagos and Almuñécar – they all follow the same topographic model: they are situated on the other bank of the river only a short distance from the area of occupation (Fig. 88). We are reminded of Gadir, where the necropolis is situated in the Puertas de Tierra region, on the other side of the Bahia-Caleta channel and facing the city.

The custom of siting the necropolis on the far side of a river bed or a channel does not appear to have been a random occurrence, since we find it in Tyre as well. As will be remembered, the necropolises at Tyre must have been situated in Ushu or Palaeotyre, on the mainland, just as happened in Delos, defined as a 'purified island' because it was devoid of tombs (Thucydides 1:8). And a watercourse, the Ras el-Ain, ran through Palaeotyre at its mouth.

To conclude, let us remember that each and every one of the Phoenician establishments in eastern Andalusia combined all the right conditions for anchorages for shipping, located as they were on bays

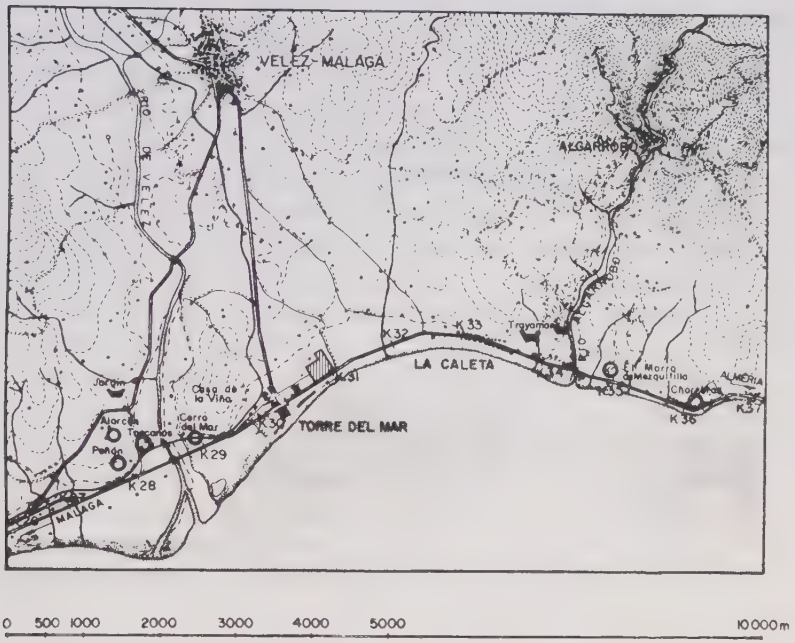


Fig. 88 The Phoenician colonies on the mouths of the Vélez and the Algarrobo and the corresponding necropolises

and inlets, well sheltered from winds and currents. The Phoenicians were familiar with the sea and knew where to site their permanent settlements.

The coast of Malaga, Granada and Almería has changed considerably over the past 2000 years. River silts and changes in the basic river levels have filled up the ancient estuaries and moved the old Phoenician enclaves back from the coastline. Thus, for example, Toscanos, which today is a few kilometres from the sea, was originally a coastal port, as was Cerro del Prado, now 3 km from the sea. More striking is the example of Cerro del Villar, which today is a small mound some distance from the coast and which used to be an island in the middle of the estuary of the Guadalhorce (see below, Fig. 95).

The advantage of an island settlement facing the mainland, like Cerro del Villar, Gadir, Mogador, Sulcis or Motya, lay in the sureness of its defence against possible dangers from the mainland or the sea. Above all, it suggests wariness and prudence on the part of a few colonists exposed to the rigours and threats of an unknown coast. In

general, an island would constitute a bridgehead preparatory to a subsequent occupation of the mainland. Moreover, by installing themselves on capes and promontories, they were guaranteed not only natural defences but good visibility for shipping, a haven and a sheltered beach with facilities for loading and unloading.

We have already seen one constant factor apparently determining the site of any early Phoenician outpost in the region: its position on a river delta. The situation on the mouth of a river implies, for one thing, the possibility of following it upstream and, if possible, as with the Vélez, the Almanzora or the Guadalhorce, of sailing up it. In antiquity, the river constituted the ideal communication route insofar as by simply following it upstream it is possible to gain access to the resources of the interior and start trading with other groups. Besides, the importance of rivers for ancient trade in general is well known and is mirrored clearly in the Near East, where the term used for market and trader – *kārum* – is the very one used to designate a riverside wharf. Consequently a river means access to resources and a favourable route for commercial penetration, facilities for the transport of merchandise and, in short, the economic autonomy of the centre. But a river also means fertile lowlands and consequently the possibility of irrigated crops.

Territory, resources and economy

Between Villaricos and the Guadiaro the coast lies relatively isolated from the interior due to the Penibetic range of mountains, which runs parallel with the shoreline at an average distance of only 20 km. The range in turn forms a series of small, narrow, alluvial valleys dominated by a Phoenician post at the mouth. Several natural ways through, like the river Guadalhorce itself, the Guadiaro or the course of the Vélez through the gorge of Zafarraya, provide direct communication between the coast and the lands of Ronda, Antequera and the Vega de Granada.

The region enjoys a warm, temperate climate, characterized by short, mild winters – the mountains providing a barrier to the cold winds from the north – and very dry summers. The annual rainfall is some 300 to 400 mm with five or six dry months in the year (May to October), so that many of the rivers like the Vélez and the Algarrobo are usually completely dry in summer. This climate, which produces a semi-steppe-like vegetation, has hardly changed in the past 3000

years, although, around 700 BC, the humidity index was higher and extensive forests covered the mountains of the interior.

The intensive use of charcoal for smelting metals and for shipbuilding in ancient times has been cited as a probable cause of this deforestation. But, apart from Villaricos, where there are traces of the extraction of silver ore from the prehistoric age to the Punic period, the remaining territory is not exactly famous for spectacular metal deposits. Although rich deposits of iron ore are known in the mountainous regions of Ronda, Archidona, Antequera, the upper Guadalhorce and in the Alpujarras, and mercury and lead are to be found in Adra and Granada, we have no proof that these were exploited in the Phoenician period. Moreover, iron exploitation alone would not explain a population staying in the same place for 200 years, since this metal is relatively accessible everywhere in the Mediterranean. We have the example of Cerro del Villar, in the Guadalhorce, a Phoenician enclave a little more than 40 km away from the nearest iron mines in the Sierra Blanca de Marbella; it did not offer much in the way of facilities for processing iron. In the Malaga and Toscanos regions, the existence of copper, lead and seams of iron is documented 15 km from the coast, but there is no evidence that these generally very scarce metals were intensively exploited.

So other causes of deforestation seem likely, as for example large-scale industrial activities or intensive stock-raising and agriculture. In order to reconstruct the economic activity of that type of establishment, we must necessarily have recourse to the archaeological record and to analyses of the fauna and other food resources.

The presence of murex in Almuñécar, Toscanos and Morro de Mezquitilla is a sign of the purple industry in the zone. The Phoenicians also went in for fishing tuna, sturgeon, eels and other species, thus preparing the way for the famous and prosperous industries derived from fish – salting, *garum*, preserves – of the Punic period in the fifth to first centuries BC, especially at Sexi, Malaka and Abdera (Mela 2:94; Strabo 3:4, 2).

A large part of the industrial, commercial and fishing activity of these small Phoenician colonies seems to fit into a self-governing and self-sufficient economic structure. It is logical that arable lands and pastures were needed, extensive enough to feed a colony that, from the end of the eighth century, was constantly increasing in population. The immediate territory of these fertile river plains offered huge possibilities, both for their own subsistence and for the development of

commercial agriculture aimed at producing wine and oil on a large scale.

An economy of that type, combined with intensive, commercially oriented agriculture in the hinterland of the colonies, whether controlled by the colonists or by the natives of the interior, could well cause more degradation of the countryside and woodlands than would intensive metallurgy. From this new angle, the settlement pattern typical of this colonial network becomes more coherent: instead of a population organized around great port cities, the people operate in small, self-sufficient centres, adapting successively to the different alluvial conditions, which are highly fertile and capable of feeding a host of decentralized groups of population. It is the same pattern of land use that prevails today in that zone, where we see significant concentrations of humanity in the valleys, practising intensive cropping and grazing. The real wealth of the Malaga and Granada coastline is rooted in the agriculture practised on its river plains, very fertile lands suited to both dry and irrigated cropping.

We are told that, in the Phoenician period, a mixed deciduous woodland and open spaces with semi-steppe vegetation still existed in the mountains near the coast, where the Phoenicians of Toscanos, Malaga and Cerro del Villar hunted deer, wild boar and wild cat. We know too that sheep and goats grazed around the colonies, which implies supplies of wool, meat and milk at reasonable cost. In addition, the high percentage of bovines, confirmed in Toscanos and constantly increasing from the beginning of the seventh century BC, indicates that cattle were raised for human consumption but also as draught animals in the field, and for manure, and this suggests indirectly the practice of agriculture at the edges of the alluvial plain of the river Vélez: Cerca Niebla, Vélez-Malaga and others.

Lastly, the estuary of the river Guadalhorce provided ideal conditions for high-yielding agriculture. Archaeological finds at Cerro del Villar, such as millstones and remains of wheat and barley, hint at cereal growing in a radius of some 18 km^2.

So the main economic factors that could stimulate the founding of this colonial network on the east coast of Andalusia have been established: excellent harbour conditions and overland communication routes for interregional traffic; plentiful hunting and fishing in the area; availability of raw materials for internal industrial use; land with great agricultural potential, which could produce not just high yields

per hectare cultivated, but even surpluses of cereals, wine and oil, with a view to trade.

Nor must we forget that the siting of the Phoenician colonies at the mouth of the principal rivers of the region gave them a privileged position with a view to overland trade with the indigenous communities of the interior and to control of the shipping heading towards the Atlantic. So the indigenous element was a decisive factor in the Phoenician colonial and commercial strategy, since it was the natives and not the colonists who controlled access to the principal resources and the communication routes of the hinterland.

Toscanos: an example of a commercial enclave

Although differences, and a certain hierarchical correlation between the different settlements, can be detected, it is possible, to reconstruct the overall process by which the colonies were set up, starting from the history of Toscanos, the most extensively excavated site and the one that has provided more information than any other.

Toscanos was founded around the years 730–720 BC, judging by the chronology of the earliest pottery, all of which fits into the classic forms of Tyrian pottery of the eighth century BC (strata III and II at Tyre). Initially, a little band of Phoenicians occupied a small mound, the 'cortijo' of Toscanos, dominating the plain of the river Vélez and an important maritime bay, the morphology of which remained virtually unchanged until the Middle Ages. There they built several large, isolated dwellings (building A in Fig. 89), bounded by streets or paths similar to those of the contemporary Chorreras. After this initial phase of occupation (Toscanos I), the settlement experienced considerable growth with new luxury dwellings being built (buildings H and K). During this second phase (Toscanos II), still dated to the eighth century, a tendency towards urban agglomeration is observed, possibly in response to a second wave of colonists, particularly notable being the construction of up-market houses, a phenomenon observed at the same date in Morro de Mezquitilla (phase B1) and Chorreras. In other words, the earliest architecture on these sites marks the arrival of family groups or individuals of a fairly high economic level.

In the eighth century BC, an area of metal-workshops was already being built in the settlement at Morro de Mezquitilla for the purposes of reworking and resmelting iron locally. The appearance of this

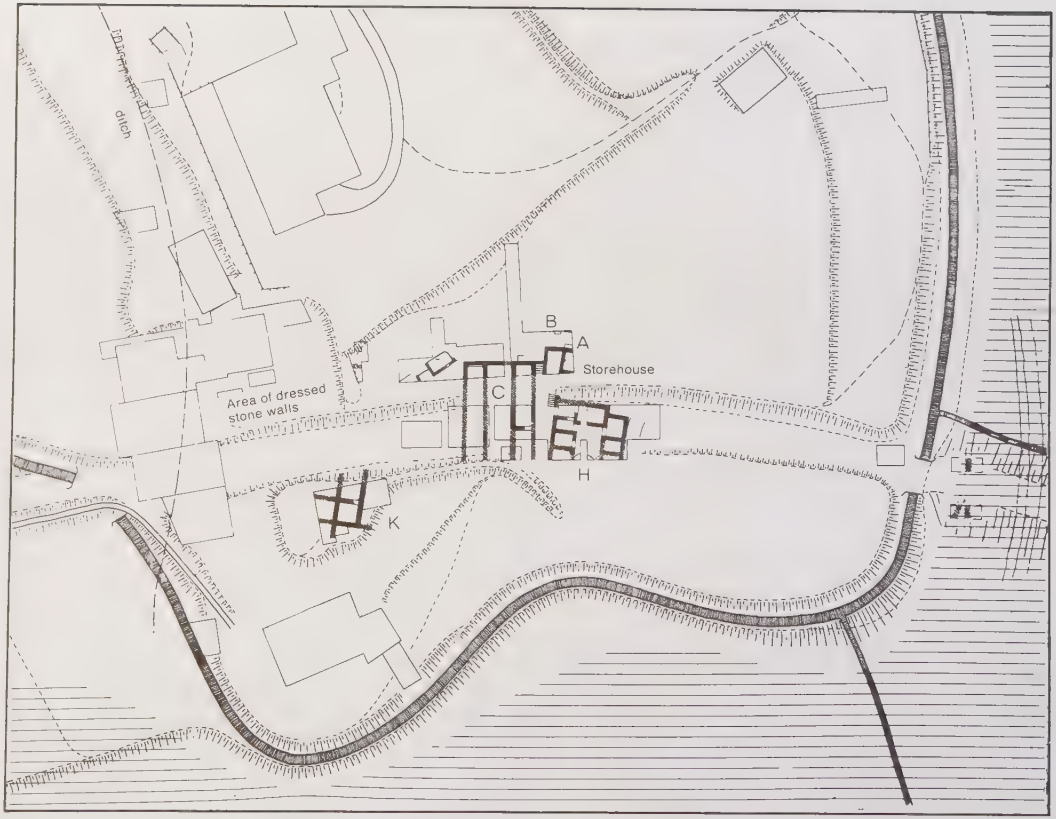


Fig. 89 Plan of Toscanos

Fig. 90 View of the triangular pit and ashlar wall, Toscanos

industrial zone on the edge of the housing area shows clearly the presence on the Algarrobo of a specialist population made up of qualified personnel, and once again does not fit in with the idea of an initial horizon of small trading posts for seafarers and modest merchants. At the end of the eighth century BC, the Phoenicians in Toscanos appear to have built a first fortification system surrounding the promontory, of which the corresponding ditch or trench cut in the rock has been preserved (Fig. 90).

Around the year 700 BC (Toscanos III), an important qualitative leap is observed which finally determines the economic character of the centre and is paralleled by similar changes taking place on the Algarrobo (Morro B2). An enormous building with three aisles and apparently two floors (building C) is erected in the middle of the hill in Toscanos, and from then on it will act as a focus for all the economic activity on the site (Fig. 91). Its similarities with other almost identical structures in Motya and Hazor have allowed it to be classified as a warehouse or repository for merchandise, a fact corroborated by the discovery inside it of amphorae and vessels for storage and transport.

In the East, a warehouse for merchandise, containing grain, oil or

Fig. 91 Plan of the warehouse at Toscanos

wine was the characteristic structure of every marketing centre or geographic concentration of commercial transactions, and in general was the forerunner of a market system. The marketplace was comparable to the modern suk and was generally an open- air site. Many of these early markets were converted later into cities like Carchemish, Kanesh or Hazor. In the Near East, the majority of these great repositories were of a private nature and in them great stocks of merchandise were stored for speculative purposes.

We do not know if this was the case with the warehouse in

Toscanos. But it is clear that this building was monumental in character and occupied a central place in the life of the community. It is precisely at the time when the warehouse was being built that small dwellings or huts appear for the first time in the vicinity of the edifice (houses E, F, G), probably intended for the staff of the warehouse and its services. And so the colonial population was organized and diversified socially.

The seventh century BC represents the period of maximum economic growth in almost all these coastal centres (Fig. 92); only a few, like Chorreras or Montilla, were abandoned. Toscanos at this time (phase IV) acquired an industrial district devoted to manufacturing objects of copper and iron for local use, and the settlement reached its maximum extent and invaded the hillsides around Peñón and Alarcón (Fig. 93). Around the years 640–630 BC, the population of Toscanos reached some 1000 or 1500 inhabitants and at these dates a new walled precinct was erected. Toscanos became a small cosmopolitan centre which, judging by the imports arriving in the Vélez region, maintained commercial contacts with Pitecusas, eastern Greece, Cyprus and the east.

Shortly after this commercial and urban highpoint, at the beginning of the sixth century BC (Toscanos V), the great central warehouse ceased to be used, the grand residences of the town centre were abandoned and the settlement was reorganized, to be finally abandoned around 550 BC. Something similar seems to have occurred in other nearby settlements. Some came into occupation again in the Punic period and others remained in ruins until the Roman period.

Cerro del Villar: a centre of production and trade

In terms of communications and economic possibilities in its immediate interior, the geo-strategic situation of this Phoenician establishment made it one of the most important Phoenician colonies on the Mediterranean coast of Andalusia. Founded at the end of the eighth century on an islet in the delta of the river Guadalhorce, it dominated the main communication route connecting the Mediterranean coast with Tartessos, across the plains of Antequera and the countryside round Seville (Fig. 94).

Both the geomorphological and the palaeogeographic studies undertaken at the mouth of the Guadalhorce, and the edaphological,

Fig. 92 Red-slip pottery from Toscanos (eighth to seventh centuries BC)

Fig. 93 Bronze thymiaterion from Cerro del Peñón

physico-chemical, pollen and anthracological analyses, reveal a landscape, in the Phoenician period, of riverside woods and marshes around the island (Fig. 95), subject to successive sea and freshwater floods due to the alluvial silting of the valley, a phenomenon that ultimately forced the Phoenicians to abandon the place and found Malaka. The degradation of the surroundings and of the forest cover, and the consequent erosion of the soil throughout the seventh and sixth centuries, shown in the pollen diagrams, was due to the intense cropping, stock raising and logging activities undertaken by the Phoenicians of Villar.

Fig. 94 Aerial view of the lower Guadalhorce

The Phoenician colony's catchment area for resources is estimated at some 18 km^2. The territory was made up of the alluvial soils of the valley, suitable for irrigated agriculture and lowland pasture, and also of clay outcrops of excellent quality which could be exploited for industrial and handicraft purposes.

The faunal record shows the existence of intensive animal husbandry, based mainly on grazing larger livestock such as pigs and ovicaprids. The agriculture, determined by carpological analysis, proved to consist of extensive cropping in the zone during the seventh and sixth centuries, with notable quantities of wheat and barley, as well as the production and marketing of wine; this coincides with the decline in the woodlands of the interior.

Recent excavations carried out on the site since 1987 have led to the documenting of a complete stratigraphic sequence, made up of ten superimposed occupation levels from the end of the eighth to the beginning of the sixth centuries. The seventh-century levels, corresponding to the period of greatest commercial and industrial activity in the Phoenician colony, are of special note, with large rectangular

Fig. 95 Aerial view of the ancient island of Villar in the mouth of the Guadalhorce

dwellings covered with flat roofs of beaten clay supported on wooden beams; they appear to be separated by wide streets (Fig. 96) and bounded occasionally by small landing-stages. Outstanding among the local activities most characteristic of the seventh century are metallurgy, dyes and products derived from fish. As to pottery, some of the imported containers reveal contacts with Sicily and Attica (see Fig. 75).

In the first half of the sixth century, the whole central area of the settlement was reserved for industrial activities. There were several kilns and buildings concerned with local pottery production, especially amphorae and large containers; this activity coincides with a boom in interregional and Mediterranean trade, judging by the many items of Phoenician pottery that turn up inland in the Guadalhorce valley, and also by imports from the Etruscan area and eastern Greece. The Greco-oriental wares and the Etruscan *bucchero* fix the end of the Phoenician occupation of the island at around 580/560 BC. All the signs indicate that the abandonment occurred very suddenly at the height of the local pottery production. At the same dates, occupation of neighbouring Malaka, little more than 4 km to the east of Cerro del Villar, was being initiated.

Fig. 96 Dwellings at Cerro del Villar (seventh century BC)

The indigenous hinterland and colonial trade

The meagre dimensions of the colonial settlements in eastern Andalusia and the small size of their necropolises suggest that the Phoenician population in this area must have been fairly limited. That means that a great deal of the activity that developed in the ports, the farmland and industry was the responsibility of the native population.

Until a short while ago the dominant view was that the Phoenicians had settled in a territory with an exceedingly sparse indigenous population, scattered in small hamlets along the valleys and mountainsides. The archaeological evidence of the past few years demonstrates, on the contrary, the presence of important nuclei of indigenous population, established since the Middle and Final Bronze Age at strategic sites dominating the main communication routes to the interior of the provinces of Malaga and Granada. Finds such as those made at Acinipo, Ronda, Almargen, Aratispi, Vélez-Malaga, Cerro de los Infantes, Mesa de Fornes or Cerro de la Mora (see Fig. 84) provide evidence that these big native townships not only controlled the main access routes to the Guadalquivir valley, the Antequera depression and the *vega* of Granada, but that, before the arrival of the Phoenicians, they played an important role in the circuits for exchanging manufactured metals and other products that linked

Tartessos and the Final Bronze Age Atlantic trade with the Mediterranean.

The Phoenician establishments on the coast of Malaga and Granada initiated commercial exchanges with the indigenous hinterland very early on. This is inferred from the presence, from the second half of the eighth century BC, of amphorae and imported articles in the native townships of the upper Guadalhorce, the *vega* of Granada and the interior of Almería, such as Cerro de los Infantes, in Pinos Puente, Cerro de la Mora, Peñon de la Reina and others. The presence of Phoenician amphorae in these zones reflects a trade in oil or wine with the interior, although in most cases we do not know what the economic rewards were.

In addition, we are aware of a host of indigenous settlements in the coastal front line controlling access to the interior; this is the case at Montilla on the mouth of the Guadiaro, or of Salobreña on that of the Guadalfeo or of Almuñécar itself, where a small, indigenous, Final Bronze Age township may have existed alongside the Phoenician colony.

The Guadiaro, one of the Andalusian rivers on the Mediterranean face, rises in the mountains of Ronda and, at its mouth, forms an inlet suitable for harbour installations. On the side of a promontory lying in line with the coast – the site of Montilla – a Final Bronze Age township has been discovered which dominated the main road communicating with the great indigenous centres of the Ronda highlands. In about the second half of the eighth century, a small Phoenician colony was founded at the foot of the promontory, directly on the bay, and was abandoned a short while later, in about 700 BC.

The examples of Montilla, Salobreña, Almuñécar and the valley of the Vélez itself, where there was an important Final Bronze Age settlement at Vélez-Malaga – a strategic watchtower dominating the river passage to the interior and, consequently, to Toscanos itself – demonstrate the extent to which Phoenician trade depended on agreements or pacts with a few communities that dominated interregional trade, the territory, the lines of communication and their own resources. So it is likely that the Phoenicians restricted themselves to exploiting a few trading circuits already in existence, reorganizing them for their own profit and availing themselves of the experience of a population with a long tradition of long-distance trade. In return, the colonial trade could consolidate the status and political power of the native chiefs in the interior, enabling them to import and control exotic or luxury

goods and transform their seats into genuine centres of political and economic control.

For a study of the mechansms of Phoenician trade, the case of Acinipo is particularly significant. Situated in the Ronda depression, in the northeast of Malaga province and in a territory with enormous agricultural potential, the indigenous settlement lay at the junction of important webs of communication, giving direct access to the bay of Cadiz across the Guadalete, to the lower Guadalquivir via Corbones and to the Mediterranean by way of the Guadiaro and the Guadalhorce. The find of a sword matrix of an Atlantic type in the heart of Ronda and of the same type of sword ('Sa Idda' type) at Almargen in the vicinity of Ronda suggest that both centres may have been important 'milestones' on the exchange circuits for manufactured metal goods, linking the Atlantic area (the Tagus estuary and the Huelva river mouth) with the valley of the Genil (Alhonoz), with the southeast (Peña Negra) and with the central Mediterranean (Sa Idda, in Sardinia).

The Final Bronze Age township of Acinipo very soon came into contact with the Phoenician colonies on the coast – the first imports, like amphorae containing *garum*, date from the second half of the eighth century, a contact that materialized in a restructuring of the territory and the creation of a series of dependent economies.

Indeed, during the eighth to seventh centuries BC, a score of agricultural villages, devoted to growing cereals, vines and olives, emerged on the plain; this activity, centred around Acinipo, coincided with a considerable felling of the woods in the zone. The intensification of agriculture and centralized production, then, were the immediate consequences of trade with the Phoenicians in Cerro del Villar and Montilla, with all the social and political implications that such a process brings in its wake. In the seventh century, Acinipo covered an area of ten hectares and took on a clearly hierarchical urban structure. The culmination of the process of economic and social centralization was the appearance in the mid-sixth century of a new political centre, the *oppidum* of Silla del Moro, which became the main nucleus controlling the territory.

In general, Phoenician trade promoted an intensification of the exploitation of raw materials -- mining, agriculture, grazing – through intensive use of resources, at the same time as it fostered in particular territories the production of goods for commerce and consumption, and a demand for formerly non-existent products. Large-scale commercialization of agricultural products and, of course, supplying a workforce and subsistence goods to the coast must have generated

important changes in the socio-political organization of the indigenous communities on the periphery of the colonies. How indigenous centres like Acinipo or Ronda and their interregional exchange networks were integrated into Phoenician trade, and in what form the indigenous communities involved were organized hierarchically, are aspects that still require rigorous analysis in terms of spheres of socio-economic interaction.

At all events, the example of Acinipo shows that a study of the interrelations between a colonial system and the indigenous world in terms exclusively of 'acculturation' and 'orientalization', as has been done until now, is insufficient, not to say inadequate. When speaking of the interaction of unequal communities and economies, consideration must be given not only to cultural exchange, the spread of information and technology, or trade, but also, and above all, to the forms of integration, adaptation, resistance and exploitation generated by the cultural encounter of two disparate societies. It must be said that the history of this cultural encounter cannot be written exclusively in colonial terms but rather from a bilateral, overall view.

The necropolises and colonial society

Analysis of the necropolises is particularly important for a reconstruction of the social structure of a community. And the Phoenician necropolises situated along the coast of Malaga and Granada are doubly important because they are the only ones we know on the Iberian Peninsula belonging to this early period.

In the west we have a relative abundance of information about the period when the Phoenicians arrived at the Straits of Gibraltar, about their trading mechanisms, their economic objectives and even the institutional or ideological features underpinning this enterprise. But we know almost nothing about those involved in it and their social origins; hence the importance of funerary archaeology, given that the material expression of a society's funerary practices is usually a product and also a reflection of the complexity of its social organization.

We have already seen that in Toscanos and other Phoenician centres on the coast, like Cerro del Villar, traders, metal-workers, storemen, stevedores, miners, fishermen, architects and, of course, craft workers, especially potters, were living, since a great deal of the Phoenician pottery was produced locally. This means that not all the population was involved in commerce.

The Phoenician population settled on the Mediterranean coast forms part of the cultural orbit of Gadir, Mogador, Lixus and, as we shall see, of Ibiza, an orbit defined by products of relatively uniform workmanship, the same settlement pattern and a few, very homogeneous trading circuits. In spite of several 'western' features, which reveal themselves in certain strange shapes of pottery – tripods, lamps with two wicks, amphorae – this Phoenician society, probably dependent on Gadir, always maintained very close links with Tyre. In a way, the Phoenician material culture of the Iberian Peninsula is more oriental, or, if you like, more Tyrian than that of the groups in the central Mediterranean.

The Phoenicians who reached the shores of Andalusia or of Atlantic Morocco were not simple merchants, fishermen or sailors. The great central warehouse in Toscanos indicates that, from 700 BC onwards at least, a tendency for the settlements to specialize manifested itself in the region and they were distinguished one from another by their predominantly agricultural, mercantile or harbour activities. The storage capacity of the warehouse was undoubtedly greater than the needs of the population of Toscanos. The fortification of the place, too, and other urban elements denote a perfectly coordinated, and to some extent centralized administrative, public and mercantile organization. Lastly, the civic architecture of Chorreras, Toscanos and Morro de Mezquitilla suggests the presence in the region of a specialized and highly qualified mercantile 'bourgeoisie'. The form and content of their necropolises seem to point in the same direction.

So far, only four Phoenician necropolises are known on the coast of Malaga and Granada and even then only incompletely: the one for Toscanos, on the slopes of Cerro del Mar on the left bank of the Vélez, which has produced cremation tombs of the seventh century BC similar to those at Almuñécar; the one for Morro de Mezquitilla, at Trayamar, from the seventh century BC, on the right bank of the Algarrobo; the one for Lagos, near Chorreras; and, lastly, the one for Almuñécar in Cerro de San Cristobal, the richest in numbers of burials from the eighth and seventh centuries BC. One constant factor in all these necropolises is the absolute predominance of cremation, associated with a type of funerary offering that always follows the same model: two red-slip jugs, intended perhaps to contain fragrant substances or water, plates for food, a lamp or censer placed next to the body and some amphorae and jewels placed in a recess or close to the burial (Fig. 97). The question of Phoenician cremation in the west is

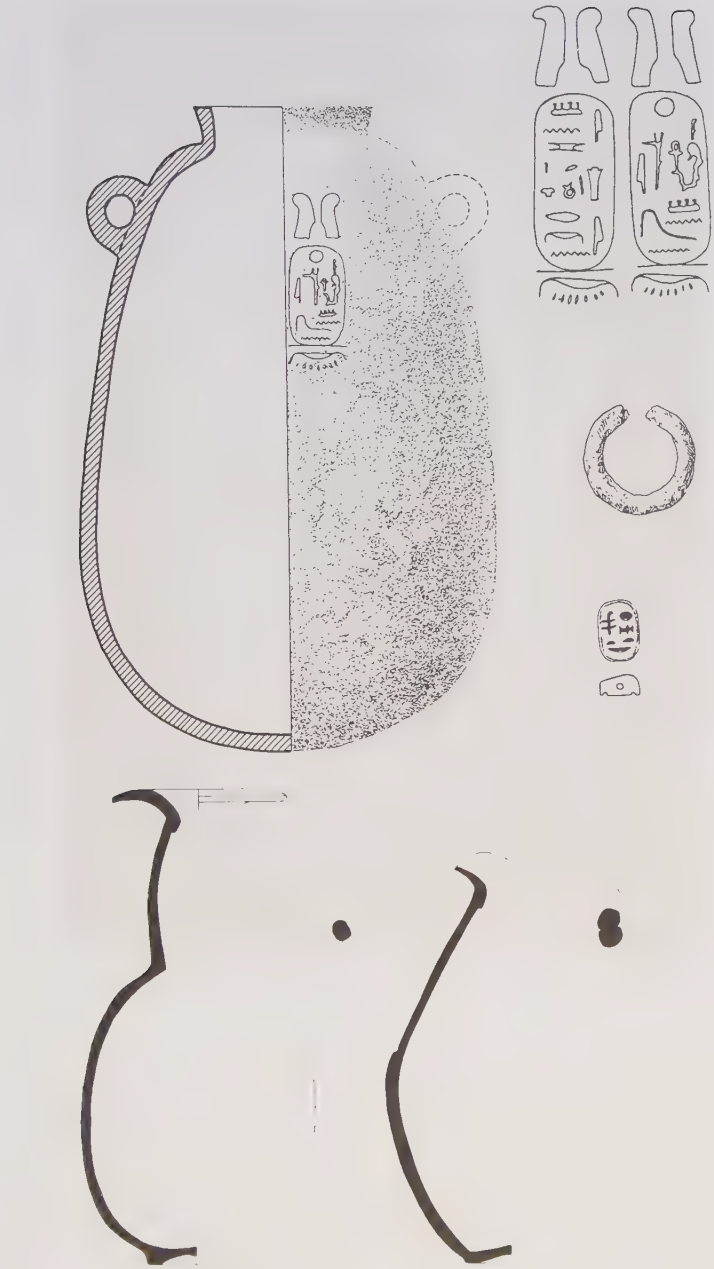


Fig. 97 Grave goods from Tomb 20 at Almuñécar (seventh century BC)

Fig. 98 Alabaster urn from Tomb 3 in the 'Laurita' necropolis at Almuñécar

still an unknown quantity; except in Carthage, it was much more common than inhumation until the sixth century BC. In ancient Carthage, cremation was sporadic and it was apparently very much a minority custom in Syria, where we note the first examples during the eleventh to ninth centuries BC in Hama, Tell Halaf and Carchemish, and in Phoenicia, where there are a few cremation burials from the eighth to seventh centuries BC in Tell Arqa, Khaldé and Tell er-Rachidiyeh near Tyre.

In Andalusia, however, we must emphasize a significant feature: in

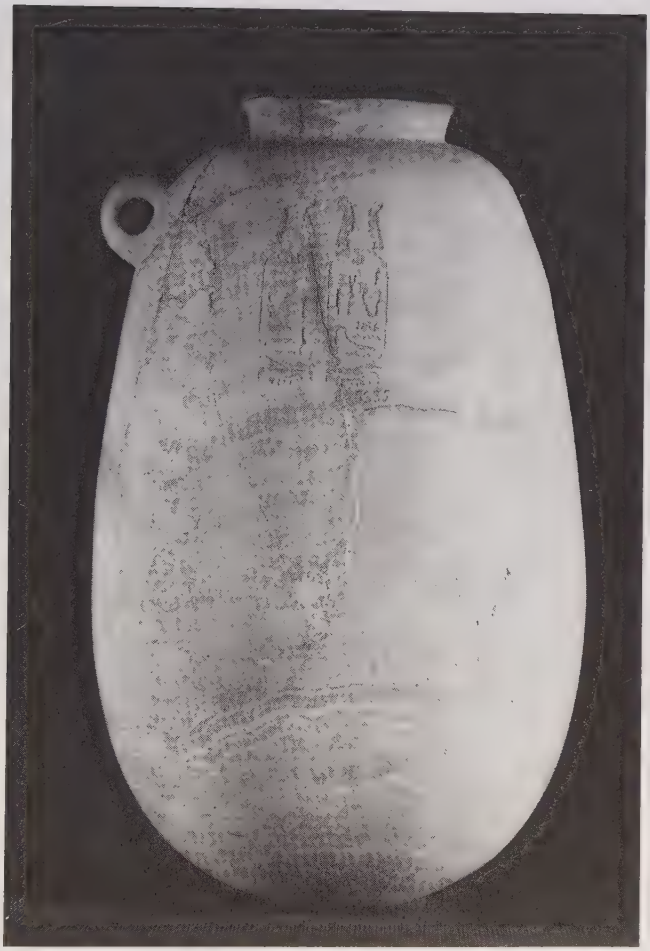


Fig. 99 Alabaster urn from Tomb 20 in the 'Laurita' necropolis at Almuñécar

many of the cremation burials at Almuñécar and in one burial found in Lagos, the ashes are placed in costly urns of alabaster or marble, made in Egypt (Fig. 98). In Trayamar or Toscanos, these alabaster urns could simply be imitations. The fact is that in Almuñécar some of them are adorned with inscriptions and emblems of the pharaohs of the Twenty-Second Dynasty, such as Osorkon II, Takelor II and Sheshonq III, who governed Egypt between 874 and 773 BC (Fig. 99). These are undoubtedly exceptional pieces, proceeding from the sacking of Egyptian royal tombs or perhaps from gifts offered by the

Fig. 100 Tomb 1 at Trayamar

pharaohs to the king of Tyre–Sidon. These alabaster vases, which originally contained quality wine, judging by some of the inscriptions, have also been found in the royal palaces of Assur and Samaria, as part of the booty of war or else gifts between royal houses.

We do not know under what circumstances they reached Spain but the fact is that we have in Almuñécar one of the most spectacular collections of Egyptian royal pieces in the Mediterranean. The Phoenicians of Almuñécar elected to use them as cinerary urns which they deposited at the bottom of their grave pits, between two and five metres deep.

In the valley of the Algarrobo, another form of burial has been documented: at Trayamar, great hypogea built of ashlars and furnished with a wooden covering and an access corridor have been excavated (Fig. 100). The monumental architecture of these sepulchres reveals the presence in the Algarrobo and Morro de Mezquitilla region of eastern architects who used certain very standard techniques of rubble-work in which stone and wood are combined, a technique known only in the east. The importance of these chambered tombs is that they were used for several generations all through the second half of the seventh century BC. So these great funerary chambers were periodically reopened and several cremations were successively placed

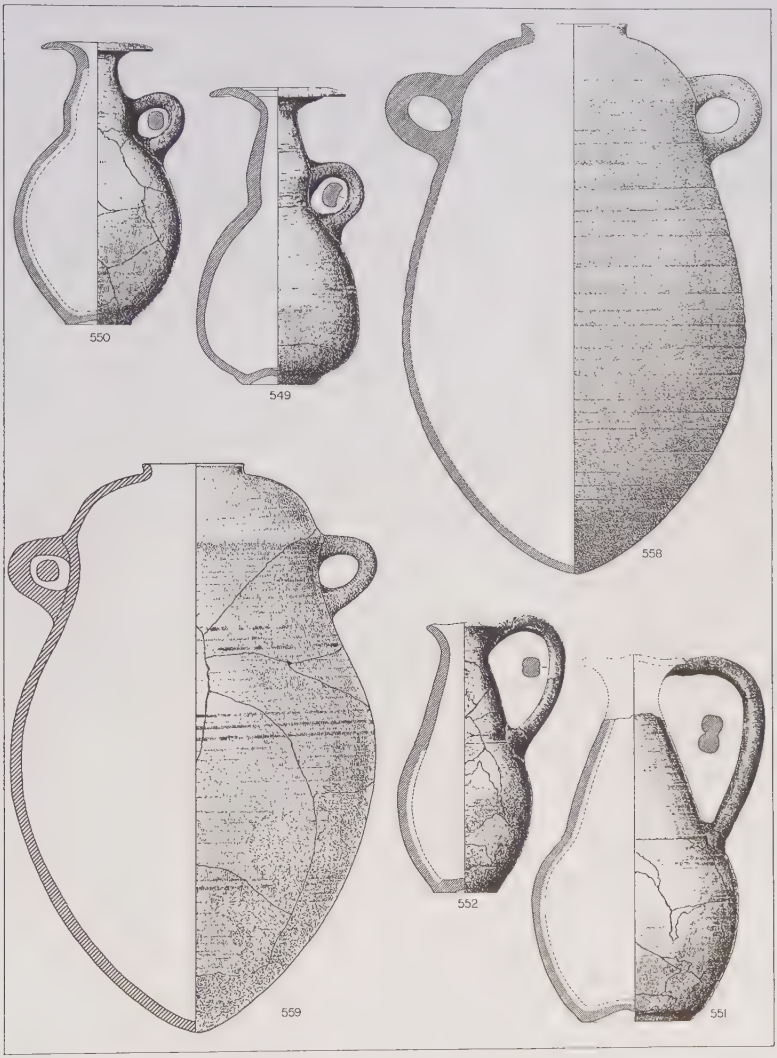


Fig. 101 Grave goods from Tomb 1 at Trayamar (seventh century BC)

inside them (Fig. 101) until the end of the seventh century when they were finally closed after the last burials had been deposited – this time inhumations.

The chambered tombs of Trayamar were built in the vicinity of pit tombs similar to those at Toscanos, Lagos and Almuñécar. Their great

capacity, monumental architecture and reuse for one or two generations by members of a group or family suggest that we may be dealing with family hypogea or pantheons, intended to shelter the remains of a social group that clearly distanced itself from the rest of the population. The family hypogeum can only mean a common funeral site for the members of a group that flaunts a permanent or exclusive burial area. This is only justifiable in the case of a kinship group which, in distant lands, maintains and ritually reinforces family bonds through continuing burial practices in the same funerary pantheon. A privileged sector of the eastern community is reproduced in the west through its monumental funerary architecture.

So the hypothesis that the burials in the chambered tombs of Trayamar were merchants, who died accidentally in the west on a journey or business trip, must be discarded in favour of one that sees them as people who had decided to remain in the west and had invested time, money and energy in building their family sepulchres. The use of specialist architects and the costs in materials and dressed stone that the building of such hypogea would entail can only imply a high social status.

Both the tombs at Trayamar and those at Almuñécar, Lagos and Toscanos confirm the presence in the Peninsula of specialist traders of high standing who dominated the economic and mercantile activity of this colonial network. The case of Trayamar suggests, moreover, the importance of the private firms or consortia that, in Phoenicia, formed part of the social elite. As you will recall, these trading companies, generally formed from the families belonging to the merchant oligarchy, very close to the palace and so to the temple, were called *hibrum*, which means trading partnership or family unit. It is equally significant that in Akkadian the word for 'family' or 'house' (*bit*, *bitum*) also means 'firm' and that in Ugaritic the word for 'brother' or 'fraternity' means 'partner' or 'company' as well.

So the Phoenician necropolises and their contents mean that we can speak of commercial agents of some standing in the west and, above all, of the presence of elite family groups, permanently resident in the Straits of Gibraltar region and probably belonging to trading consortia with enough wealth and prestige to acquire luxury objects with a 'history' – that is to say antiques – which, in the east, are pieces that belong in the circuits of reciprocal gifts exclusive to the royal houses of Tyre, Samaria and Assur.

For a study concerning aspects of population, demography, physi-

cal, morphological and ethnic features, palaeopathology and so on, the archaeological documentation relating to the funerary world of the Phoenicians is insufficient at present. The only study carried out so far on remains of human bones is the one for the burials at Lagos near Chorreras, dated to the end of the eighth century; they show a population with a fairly tough constitution and an average lifespan of some forty years.

Nevertheless the most notable feature is the volume and number of burials so far identified in eastern Andalusia, amounting to no more than about fifty: the recently discovered Phoenician 'necropolis' at Lagos with hardly more than two cremation burials; the characteristics of the ancient necropolis at Almuñécar that forms part of a relatively closed assemblage of some twenty burials in all; the four chambered tombs at Trayamar, some of them with multiple use; the few cremation graves identified at Cerro del Mar close to Toscanos; and the rare ancient burials documented at Villaricos make up rather a dismal picture of the Phoenician funerary world.

The archaeological evidence obtained from Almuñécar and Lagos demonstrates that neither of these funerary assemblages would have been much more extensive than the data in the archaeological record show. This is at odds with the apparent density of colonial settlements that existed on this stretch of the Mediterranean coastline. Although, of course, it is certain that new finds in this respect will be made in the future, what we gather today from the form and content of the tombs at Toscanos, Lagos and Almuñécar is the presence in the zone in the eighth and seventh centuries of small scattered groupings of cremation burials rather than genuine necropolises, suggesting the existence of limited social groups and an exceedingly small population.

Ibiza and Phoenician trade on the Mediterranean coast

We have already described the importance of the island of Ibiza on the shipping routes to Gadir. Until a short while ago, Ibiza was considered to be a Carthaginian foundation: Carthage was thought to have founded the colony in the years 654/653 BC (Diodorus 5:16).

However, we know today that in Ibiza, as in the rest of the west, the Carthaginian element did not burst in until the sixth century BC, and prior to that the island was occupied by a Phoenician population very close, as regards material culture, to the group of Phoenician colonies on the Straits of Gibraltar and in Atlantic Morocco.

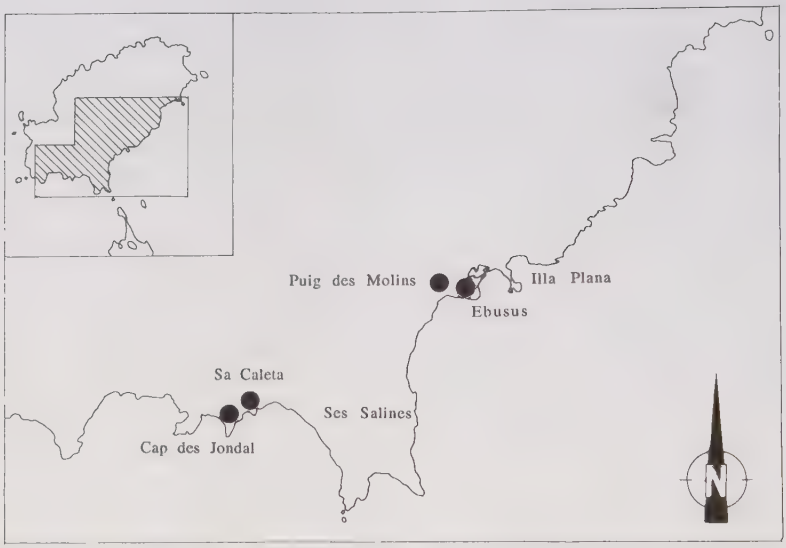


Fig. 102 Ibiza and the early settlements

The important discoveries made in recent years in the necropolis at Puig des Molins where cremation burials of the seventh and sixth centuries BC have been located, at Puig de Vila, where the old city of Ibiza is sited, which has furnished the remains of a small ancient habitat, and above all at Sa Caleta, a small peninsula in the southwest of Ibiza, where an early Phoenician settlement has been located, have given an unexpected turn to the study of the Phoenicians in the west, particularly with reference to the Mediterranean face of the Iberian Peninsula (Fig. 102). The presence of Phoenician imports of the seventh century BC, for example, in the indigenous villages of Saladares and Peña Negra de Crevillente, both in the province of Alicante, or in the centres in the Ebro valley, points up the rapid commercial expansion that took place towards the Spanish Levant and the northeast of the Peninsula after the arrival of the Phoenicians in the Balearics.

In the light of these discoveries a new reading of Diodorus' text is necessary. This historian from the first century BC is probably basing his account on Timeus when he states that the island of Ibiza had a city, Ebesos or Ebusus (from the Phoenician *Ibshim* = island of pines), a Carthaginian colony that was inhabited by 'barbarians', mostly Phoenicians (5:16, 2–3). On the other hand, Silius Italicus describes Ebusus as Phoenician (*Pun.* 3:362). So it is clear that when Carthage

seized dominion in the island, it had already been occupied by Phoenicians.

The archaeological record reveals two clearly differentiated stages in the Phoenician colonization of the island. The first would correspond to the arrival of the first Phoenician colonists, from the south of Spain, around 630 BC, and the founding of a trading post at Sa Caleta. The Sa Caleta settlement, covering some four hectares, was oriented from the outset towards trade with the Levant region of Spain, the Ebro valley and the Golfe du Lion, with the basic objective of recovering and treating metals. In a second stage, at the beginning of the sixth century, a new enclave would have been founded on the bay of Ibiza – the future Ebusus – with its corresponding cremation necropolis at Puig des Molins, at the time when Sa Caleta was being definitively abandoned. In a very short while, and already under the influence of Carthage, Ebusus would have been transformed into an urban centre and one of the most prosperous Punic cities in the western Mediterranean. Thus, from the mid-seventh century, with Ibiza as a bridgehead and Gadir dominating the other extreme, the Phoenicians had absolute control of shipping to the western Mediterranean and the Atlantic. The establishment of the Phoenicians in Ibiza had immediate repercussions on the activities of the indigenous communities of the Spanish Levant and northeast. In the region of Murcia and Alicante, however, the presence of Phoenician trade precedes the founding of Sa Caleta, so at first this zone must be considered more as an extension of the colonial and commercial activity in eastern Andalusia than as the periphery of Ibiza (see Fig. 88).

Indeed, the great Final Bronze Age townships of Los Saladares (Orihuela, Alicante), Peña Negra (Crevillente, Alicante) and Castellar de Librilla (Murcia), dated to the ninth to eighth centuries BC, received the first Phoenician imports, in the form of amphorae and red-slip ware, at the end of the eighth century (Fig. 103). Such early interest in this region on the part of Phoenician trade clearly arose from the position those centres occupied in the economy of the region, and in particular their control of the minero-metallurgical resources, for example, iron (Castellar de Librilla), of the trade in and production of weapons and bronze articles in the Atlantic tradition (Peña Negra) or of communication routes and agricultural resources (Saladares). Besides, this region was well provided with metal – copper, tin and lead in the mountains of Crevillente and the mining areas of Mazarrón and La Unión in Murcia, as well as silver-bearing minerals – as is plain

Fig. 103 Southeastern Spain: indigenous settlements (●), Phoenician colonies (○) and underwater finds (△)

from the silver foundry discovered at Punta de los Gavilanes, in Mazarrón, which was in almost uninterrupted operation throughout the Final Bronze Age, the seventh century and the fourth to third centuries BC.

The Phoenician trading presence in this zone, lying between the rivers Segura and Vinalopó, intensified throughout the seventh century. So for example, at Peña Negra, a genuine Phoenician industrial quarter was established on the outskirts of the indigenous township, devoted to the manufacture of amphorae and the production of gold objects, at a time when a Phoenician trading port similar to those on the coast of Malaga, Granada and Almería was founded at the mouth of the river Segura, at Guardamar, in the second half of the seventh century. Consequently, in geo-strategic terms, this region was able to act as a commercial distribution centre for goods from

Andalusia for the Balearics and the central Mediterranean. This is inferred from the cargo of a seventh-century Phoenician ship found in the Mar Menor in Murcia – the wreck in the bay of Campana – which was carrying ingots of tin and lead and raw ivory. Judging by the materials it contained, it was in all probability travelling from Gadir's Atlantic trading posts, that is to say Portuguese territory (tin and lead) and from Atlantic Morocco (ivory).

The high point of Ibiza's Phoenician trade falls between the second half of the seventh and the beginning of the sixth centuries and involves the whole of the Spanish Levant and northeast (Fig. 104). Indigenous townships like Vinarragell or Puig de Benicarló, both in the province of Castellón, and especially those in the Ebro valley, like Amposta and Coll del Moro, show clear signs of having entered into trading relations with the Phoenicians of Ibiza, by virtue of which the agricultural resources and the raw or recovered metals of the interior were exchanged for wine, oil and quality ceramics. The identification of small riverside warehouses containing Phoenician amphorae, like the one at Aldovesta in a bend of the river Ebro, and other finds like the wreck at Rochelongue near Agde, or the Phoenician ceramics in the main strategic centres of the Urnfield world in southern France (Mailhac, Canet) and Catalonia (Agullana, Anglés) suggest that a large part of Phoenician trading activity in these territories was aimed systematically at recovering scrap bronze to be passed to the metallurgical centres of the Mediterranean in exchange for large quantities of wine and oil.

THE TRANSITION TO THE SIXTH CENTURY

It is usual to consider the year 550 BC as the moment of transition from the Phoenician to the Punic phase in the west. This transition involved a substantial change in the geo-political picture in the western Mediterranean, discernible in many zones in the shape of unmistakable changes and transformations: a reorganization of the settlement pattern, economic changes, variations in the morphology of the pottery, the move from cremation to inhumation in the funerary field and, in certain cases, transformation from the commercial enclaves of the Phoenician period into genuine urban centres.

So it is not surprising that all these transformations are connected with a rupture and/or socio-economic crisis in the colonial systems stemming from the Phoenician diaspora, due to very complex causes.

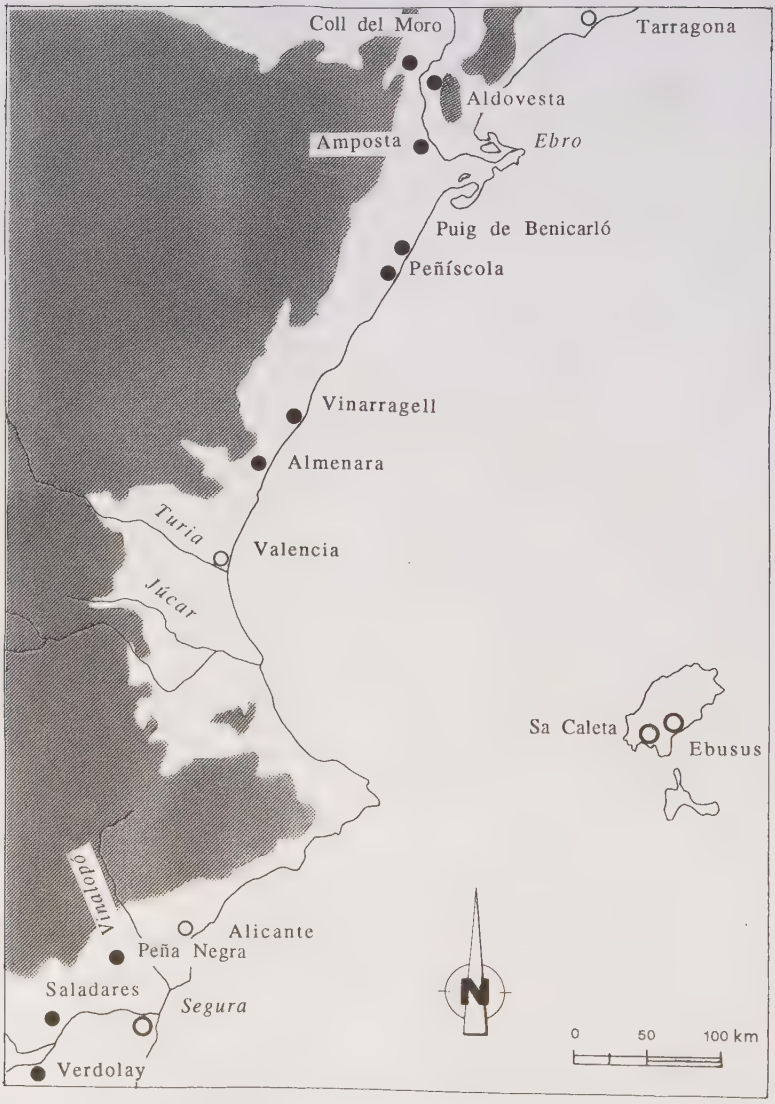


Fig. 104 The Spanish Levant and northeast: indigenous settlements (●) and Phoenician colonies (○)

These include the fall of Tyre into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar in 573 BC, the consequent hegemony of Carthage over the old Tyrian colonial enclaves, the crisis in Tartessos due to the collapse of the silver trade with the east or the intrusion of Phocean trade in Huelva from 550 BC, and may well have been decisive.

In the islands of the central Mediterranean and in Ibiza, the Punic period coincides with the first appearance of traces of a cult and sanctuaries dedicated to Tanit, the principal deity of the Carthaginian pantheon, but also with the presence of a sober and functional pottery replacing the classic Phoenician red-slip tableware, and with the generalization of burials in hypogea cut into the rock, clearly associated with North Africa. Indeed, in the second half of the sixth century, Ebusus was transformed into a prosperous city and adopted Carthaginian religious, architectonic and craft forms in the framework of a process of sweeping changes that affected the islands of Sicily and Sardinia, where, too, the political hegemony and official religion of Carthage seem to have been imposed from 550 BC.

In Sardinia the transition was the consequence of Carthaginian military conquest, as the sources connected with the celebrated campaign of General Malco in 545–535 BC and the archaeological evidence documented at sites like Monte Sirai and Cuccureddus tell us. It can be inferred from this that, in the case of Ibiza, the so-called 'crisis' in the sixth century may have meant the definitive incorporation of the island into the orbit of Carthage's political influence. In this respect Ibiza seems to have been an exception among the early territories colonized by Phoenicia on the Iberian Peninsula.

In Andalusia, too, significant changes in the settlement pattern and economic activity are observed. Although in the zones influenced by Gaditanian trade, that is to say Tartessos and other Atlantic territories, such clear signs of Carthaginian influence are not so noticeable in the sixth century, nor are signs of rupture in the locations on the bay of Cadiz, in the second half of the century momentous changes are observed: the typology of the Phoenician pottery already heralds the classic Iberian Turdetanian forms of the fifth century; the Gaditanian necropolis undergoes considerable development – an unmistakable sign of demographic growth – and very soon there emerges on the bay an industrial area devoted to salting fish – another element characteristic of the Punic period – and large-scale production of *garum*.

But Gadir's interregional trade did indeed become seriously affected in the middle of the sixth century, judging by some of the changes to be

seen in her Atlantic colonies and by the abandonment in the mid-sixth century of the only centres excavated so far, like Mogador, and Abul in Portugal.

At the same time, from the sixth century on, Tartessos experienced a clear regression, which took the form of a drastic reduction in long-distance exchanges, a decline in Phoenician imports, the progressive disappearance of the 'princely' tombs in the Guadalquivir valley and the gradual concentration of economic activities in a few centres – the *oppida*. These, like Carmona and in partcular the centres on the upper Guadalquivir, would come to exercise political control in the territory from the end of that century.

The crisis in Tartessos was still more severe in the minero-metallurgical territories of the Huelva region. Already at the end of the seventh century a considerable reduction can be seen in the production of silver, and some of the metallurgical centres like San Bartolomé de Almonte were abandoned. This decline coincided with the arrival of the first Greek pottery in Huelva and Tejada la Vieja; some authors interpret this as a sign of the presence of Phocean trade, which would have come about as a result of the evident weakness of Phoenician trade in the zone. Lastly, in the second half of the sixth century, the Tartessian settlement at Huelva started on a marked urban, demographic and economic decline, while imports ceased altogether. In the interior, the walls of Tejada were strengthened at these dates and the population abandoned all mining activity in favour of growing cereals. So between 550 and 500 BC a profound crisis took place in the production of silver, which would have negative repercussions on the economy of the Huelva region for a long time.

Other references confirm the complexity of this crisis. Thus, about 570 BC, a Greek, Midocrites, travelled to the Cassiterites in search of tin (Pliny *Nat. Hist.* 7:1.297), thanks, probably to the relaxation in the control of the Atlantic metal routes. Between 550 and 500 BC an attempt was made by the Turdetanian Iberians to attack Gadir by sea (Macrobius *Saturn.* 1:20, 12). And other classical historians (Justinus 44:5, 2–4; Polybius 11 1, 5) allude to the presence of the Carthaginian armies, which would have come to the aid of Cadiz because of the collapse of Tartessos.

Whatever the reason, the Tartessian crisis coincided with a shift of the main centres of indigenous political decision-making towards the periphery which, like the upper Guadalquivir region, was very soon to see the appearance of the first *oppida* and real Iberian states.

But significant changes are observed too in other regions that cannot easily be associated with the crisis in Tartessos or the arrival of Greek trade. We are referring to Mediterranean Andalusia where various archaeological indications suggest that some of the Phoenician trading posts – Cerro del Prado on the river Guadarranque, Abdera, Morro de Mezquitilla and Baria/Villaricos – continued functioning until the fifth century or even the Roman period, although the data so far published do not allow us to determine exactly what happened in the sixth century.

On the other hand, the Phoenician centres that have been the subject of the most systematic studies, like Toscanos, reveal a significant restructuring of the settlement pattern during the sixth century and some kind of break in their cultural evolution. In fact, after a series of urban and architectonic changes at the end of the seventh century, the place was abandoned around 570/550 BC, during the so-called phase V at Toscanos. In spite of everything, no hiatus in the population is observed, since the Jardín necropolis to the north of Toscanos started at the same date; it contains mostly inhumation burials and replaced the ancient cremation necropolis that had been set up at Cerro del Mar. The location of the habitat corresponding to the Punic necropolis of Jardín is not known, since the only known settlement of the fifth to third centuries BC is the one at Cerro del Mar, which sheltered a small indigenous village.

In other parts of the coast of Malaga, Granada and Almería, the sixth-century transition coincided with a process of rapid concentration of the Phoenicio-Punic population in a few ports. So, in the bay of Malaga, the abandonment of Cerro del Villar at the beginning of the sixth century, due to the degradation of the surroundings and the silting up of the mouth of the Guadalhorce, forced the Phoenicians to move to neighbouring Malaka, the location of which made it possible to house a more important harbour establishment. Malaka very soon became the principal port before the Straits and represents the transition of the Phoenician colony to a Punic city, more open to the sea, to external trade and to the orbit of Carthage than its predecessor at Cerro del Villar, facing preferentially towards the hinterland and the Gadir circle.

It is by no means easy to determine the precise causes of such a complex crisis, nor to reconstruct the dynamics of the transition from the Phoenician world to the Punic world. And it is not easy because all the signs point to Gadir staying on the fringes of the conflict that saw

Carthage at odds with the rest of the Mediterranean powers, and preserving her independence for a long time. If in Sardinia, Sicily and even Ibiza the sixth-century transition is synonymous with Carthaginian hegemony, in the far west the changes that took place in the Phoenician colonial sphere undoubtedly arose from much more profound socio-political factors and from a series of linked circumstances that came together largely in the first half of the sixth century: the fall of Tyre into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar after a siege lasting thirteen years (586–573 BC), which could not but have repercussions in the west; the crisis in Tartessos, now satisfactorily explained; the formation of the Iberian states in the hinterland of the colonies and the entrance of Carthage on to the scene with the consequent conflict of interests that would arise in the western Mediterranean. In short, it was a situation that probably made it advisable to concentrate forces and centralize production and trade in a few nuclei – Gadir, Malaka, Ebusus – that had now become genuine focuses of social and economic nuclearization.

There can be no doubt that the Phoenicians had generated wealth and stimulated transformations at the heart of the indigenous societies of Andalusia and the Mediterranean coast. However, this wealth was concentrated in minority sectors of the population, sectors known to us through their sumptuous burials at Huelva, on the lower Guadalquivir and in Estremadura. But the Phoenicians also exhausted the resources of the western Mediterranean. If, to the tons of silver extracted from the mountains of Huelva and Seville, we add not only the ecological and forest degradation due to the large-scale use of wood as fuel for minero-metallurgical work and for kilns to produce pottery, but also the intensification of agriculture, we shall have to agree that the balance was negative for the indigenous world.

In the Guadalquivir valley and on the east coast of Andalusia, intensive agriculture and the spread of irrigation in the interior, thanks to an advanced technology and to the introduction by the Phoenicians of iron metallurgy in the form of implements for use in agriculture, imply the retreat of the forested area, the degradation of the environment and the transformation of vast expanses of land into pasture and savannah. We have here the typical degradation of the landscape and resources that occurs after a colonial period.

11

Concluding thoughts

All through this volume, we have attempted to show that Tyre's commercial venture was far from being a uniform undertaking. Indeed, the expansion to the west, which constitutes Tyre's last trading circuit and also her last monopoly, had arisen as a consequence of a situation marked by a strong demand for raw materials, profound economic imbalances with major deficits in, for example metal and grain, but also with great surpluses – population, specialized production – which became more acute between the years 850 and 750 BC. The structural elements in this crisis must have influenced the orientation and development of the individual trading settlements of Tyre in the west, which were shaped primarily by the proposed objectives for, and the economic possibilities of, each territory. Thus, for example, the economic objectives pursued in the founding of Gadir could not have been the same as those that led to the founding of Carthage or Ibiza.

And yet there is a tendency to simplify the interpretation of the Phoenician settlement model in the west and to reduce the plan to two single possible alternatives – commercial expansion versus colonization, or, which amounts to the same thing, founding trading posts versus founding colonies, when probably both forms – commercial colonies and colonies for population – coexisted (cf. Moscati, 1993, p. 23; Niemeyer, 1994, pp. 339–341). Similarly, it is customary to contrast two institutional models of long-distance trade – the state enterprise versus private initiative or, which is the same thing, administered trade against market trade – as mutually exclusive mechanisms. But all these categories and terminologies, when used, have proved inadequate for assessing the complexity of the process.

TRADING POSTS, COLONIES AND EMPORIA

In order to reconstruct the forms of Phoenician expansion to the west, various categories of analysis are commonly proposed, based in

general on the Greek colonial model – emporium, colony – or else on the substantivist theories of Polanyi's school – port of trade. A series of evolutionary stages in the west is also postulated, which would become a formula for compromise between different settlement patterns – a commercial emporium becomes a colony or city – by simply shuffling estimates of the area of occupation in the settlement or demographic theories.

The fact is that it is not easy to trace the boundaries between a colony and, for example, a commercial emporium since, in the last resort, very subjective and modern criteria are in operation when it comes to an assessment of the different categories of colonial establishment. In general, Greek expansion to the west is thought to have been a fundamentally agrarian phenomenon with colonizing aims. As such, colonization would have been a movement of population aimed at acquiring new lands to farm, because of demographic and subsistence problems in the country of origin.

The term 'colonization' then is economic and political in character insofar as it implies the emigration of groups of people to other territories where, by means of colonies or *apoikíai,* the residents maintain a 'feel' of their original community in matters of language, culture and political institutions. The essential characteristic of the Greek colony or self-sufficient city state lies precisely in the fact that it had its own agricultural land, the *chora*, on the territorial organization of which depended the autonomy and sovereignty of the colonial structure.

This model is usually contrasted with the Phoenician overseas settlement, and it is asserted that the Tyrians were not seeking to occupy land but, basically, to obtain raw materials, if possible in places that offered harbour facilities and, in addition, would guarantee an indigenous clientele with whom to exchange merchandise. In this way, by stressing the exclusively commercial character of the Phoenician diaspora, its settlements in the west are reduced to mere staging posts for shipping, trading marts and merchant ports with no other purpose than trade. Only one Phoenician foundation in the west would have come into being with the rank of colony – Carthage – since its origins are connected with a phenomenon of political assimilation of territory.

Indeed, rather than a commercial emporium, Carthage should be spoken of as an aristocratic colony, which very quickly attained urban status and, through its particularly puritanical and conservative civico-religious institutions, was to monopolize the economic and ideological activity of vast territories in the west. Its ruling class,

closely linked to the state and, especially from the sixth century BC, to ownership of land, converted the North African metropolis into an aristocratic state, springing out of its own monarchic origins. The founding of Carthage would have been an institutional act, the work of Tyrian aristocrats, who came to possess lands by virtue of their status and who renewed and maintained firm ties of friendship with Tyre until the Hellenistic period.

Furthermore a hierarchical scale is postulated in the ambit of the Phoenician establishments in the west, which goes from the lowest category of trading mart or temporary establishment in the form of a foreign branch, equivalent to the French *comptoir* and directed towards acquiring raw materials and engaging in industrial activity, to the highest category of commercial enclave, up to the *emporion* or centre for redistribution, equipped with warehouses for merchandise, inhabited by various kinds of merchant and organized around a temple. The best known examples would be Al Mina, Naucratis, Pitecusas and Massalia. Only certain emporia would have attained the status of colony or city, as is the case with Naucratis, Pitecusas or Motya.

An eastern and substantivist version of the emporium would be the port of trade administered by professional traders who act on behalf of the state and operate according to treaties and prices stipulated with the local or indigenous authorities. The fact is that, if we forget all its pre-mercantile and Polanyist connotations, the concept of the port of trade or merchant port is the closest to some of the Phoenician installations in th west, like Gadir itself.

As we have already stated in Chapter 3, the merchant port equipped with large warehouses acted as a central site for the exploitation and distribution to the market of the natural resources of a territory and constituted the chief intermediate centre in long-distance trade. Its population was made up of professionals, high-ranking officials and guild organizations, who would usually settle in politically vulnerable regions, on the coast or the banks of a river, but with a hinterland that was rich in resources.

In western Asia, this institution was also called *kārum*, a centre administered by mercantile agents and consortia, whose activity was dependent on a central market (Assur, Tyre); in Phoenicia it developed under the aegis of the oligarchy. The merchant oligarchy was dependent on palace circles, although its activities did not exclude operations of a private nature.

Occasionally these centres of international trade were no more than business areas, in the style of the Assyrian districts in Kanesh and Hattusas or the Phoenician districts in Damascus, Samaria and Memphis. An institution common to them all was the temple, the protector of trade and the meeting place of merchants and natives; it represented the authority of Tyre or of Assur.

THE CONCEPT OF A 'COMMERCIAL DIASPORA'

In this discussion, it is worth drawing attention to a suprahistorical model of commercial expansion because of its importance; it was put forward a few years ago by Curtin (1984) and looks in particular at the dominant forms of interrelationship between trading communities with a common origin. This model, known as 'commercial diaspora', is defined by Curtin as a network of specialized communities, socially interdependent but spatially scattered, initiated by cultural minorities which, with time, tend to form a kind of monopoly over the indigenous or host society. According to this theory, the balance of political and social power would necessarily have been distorted in relation to the natives, in that the trader is a specialist and the native is not.

In any commercial diaspora, mercantile specialization and group solidarity would have been predominant through various mechanisms ranging from what Curtin calls peaceful and neutral self-governing trading communities to commercial empires, run from a few colonial enclaves, genuine advance guards of the metropolis, in control of a broad territory and of exchange by coercion. The British and Dutch colonies in Asia in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries would be an example of this.

As for the internal relations between the nodes of a diaspora, various degrees of formalism would exist, ranging from a few minimal links based on the solidarity afforded by a common religion, language and culture to colonies established as political entities controlled from a central colonial power – governor, viceroy – with the capital city, at least, in the country of origin, from where a powerful commercial firm would operate.

An example of the qualitative evolution of a commercial diaspora would be the Hanseatic League; its commercial network, initiated in the twelfth to thirteenth centuries by merchants in Cologne, gave rise to prosperous independent cities in north Germany and the Baltic in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

In any case, ever since antiquity settlements arising from a commercial diaspora have been specialized and multi-functional centres, which came to form an interdependent network thriving on the different relationship of each settlement to its respective environment. This would logically have favoured a process of functional hierarchization and, in the long run, a phenomenon of political dependence by certain centres in relation to others. Something of this kind must have happened in the commercial network of Gadir or in the orbit of Carthage itself.

In spite of their relative autonomy, the centres of a commercial diaspora would have depended in one way or another, still according to Curtin's model, on the metropolis. Therefore, the disappearance and decline of a commercial network of this kind was wont to occur when the trade ceased to be important for the metropolis.

WESTERN MODELS

We have already seen how certain categories of commercial or colonial settlement attributed to the Phoenicians do not match up to the empirical evidence in the west. So, for example, the model of the trading port or merchant emporion seems to fit in with the establishments in eastern Andalusia but not with those, like Sulcis, that exercised political and commercial control over the hinterland.

By contrast, Gadir, which constituted the mercantile metropolis *par excellence* in the far west, is called *polis apoikos*, that is, colony, by Diodorus after the author had assured us that Tyre's objective was not colonization but trade (Diodorus 25:10, 1; 5:58, 2–3; 5:74, 1). So the contradictions are already arising in the Hellenistic and Roman period.

Elsewhere, it has been observed that the success of the Phoenicians in some areas of the west favoured the evolution of some of the bases or initial trading posts, like Ibiza or Motya, into genuine cities or colonies. From this point of view the evolutionary process would have been the reverse of the Greek model: colonization would have succeeded trade and not trade agricultural colonization.

In the west, various models of Phoenician integration into the different occupied territories can be observed; their chief characteristics are determined by their own socio-political origins, their strategic function or their relationship with the territory being exploited economically. In this overall evaluation, we cannot leave aside an aspect that people

often forget to mention when dealing with Phoenician expansion into the Mediterranean: that all through its history, the commercial policy of Tyre showed clear territorial and expansionist aspirations.

It is equally necessary to bear in mind that we are ignorant of the initial scope of the main colonies in the west. The evidence shows that the vast majority were founded throughout the eighth century BC, and that some of them, like the installations along the coastline of Malaga and Granada, brought in a limited but well-organized contingent of oriental population from the start. In every case, it is between 720 and 700 BC that a spectacular growth of the western colonies is recorded, due perhaps to the arrival of a second wave of colonists or else to internal demographic growth, which is clearly going to coincide with their development and specialization. Around 700 BC the *tophet* at Carthage was established; Motya became a commercial and industrial centre of some standing; and in Toscanos administrative buildings and mercantile installations arose; and so the functions of these colonies were diversified.

Among the categories of colonial settlement, the mercantile model represented by Gadir stands out. Gadir was a mercantile metropolis, founded in response to the resources of Lower Andalusia – Tartessos – with which it established direct trade. This trade was centred to such an extent on the interests of supply and demand that in the end it generated a process of mutual dependence between the Phoenicians and the natives. As a projection of Tyrian society and its economy, the mercantile activity of the colony could have been controlled by powerful private traders and agents commissioned by the state, whose ideological links with the political institutions of Tyre were established through the temple of Melqart. These 'merchant princes', in charge of important merchant fleets, operated as readily on their own account as on that of the king of Tyre, since, as we saw in Chapter 3, in Tyre and other Phoenician cities the state and private spheres overlapped. In any case, the economy of Tyre depended on the successes of its merchant oligarchy abroad.

Gadir restricted itself to creating its own regions of mercantile exploitation – Atlantic Morocco, for example, and Portugal and Oran – and gradually took control of the extraction of and trade in metals in the Lower Guadalquivir. The characteristics of Tartessian society, revolving around dense and relatively organized communities, determined the character and mercantile function of Gadir. In effect, Gadir did not control the Tartessian hinterland since that was already occu-

pied by a developed population. For that reason, the only traces we know of Phoenician defensive systems or fortifications are limited to the city of Gadir itself.

The picture presented by the Phoenician establishments in eastern Andalusia is quite different. The colonies of Toscanos, Morro de Mezquitilla and Almuñécar very soon developed specialized production and formed small units in a single vast territory that was highly strategic from the point of view of communications with the interior. The Phoenician tombs in Almuñécar, Lagos or Trayamar denote the presence of a small but powerful social class – a mixture of mercantile oligarchy and landowners – that specialized in managing trading expeditions and was occasionally organized into family firms.

The archaeological evidence makes clear that the Phoenician establishments had at their disposal a hinterland rich in agricultural resources and excellent lines of communication, but with little metallurgical interest. The presence of important indigenous centres in strategic places, dominating the main overland trade routes in the interior of the colonies, suggests that the founding of these trading establishments at the mouth of the main rivers of the region must have taken place following agreement with the local communities in the interior. Toscanos itself constitutes a significant example, a Phoenician enclave lying on the river Vélez, the mouth of which was dominated by a Final Bronze Age village on a spur above the river at Vélez-Malaga, which is still today an obligatory route for access to the gorge of Zafarraya and the fertile plains of the *vega* of Granada.

The general absence of metal in the interior of the colonies in Malaga, Granada and Almería – with the exception of Villaricos in the valley of the Almazora – has led to thought being given to alternative explanations of the Phoenician 'commercial expansion', explanations that prove inadequate or contradictory in many cases. The very idea of trade as the motive factor in the Phoenician expansion to the west has been questioned (López Castro, 1993 p. 60; González Wagner, 1993, p. 106), claiming to explain the Phoenician diaspora by the Greek model, that is to say, as a phenomenon of penetration into a territory with a view to agricultural exploitation and in order to relieve demographic pressure in the east (Whittaker, 1974). Based on an inaccurate reading of the archaeological record and ignoring the important role played by the indigenous component in the Phoenician colonization of the west, it has even been suggested that agricultural colonization by the Phoenicians existed in Tartessos (González Wagner and Alvar, 1989).

Correct appraisal of the indigenous horizon of the Final Bronze Age in all the regions where the Phoenicians would be founding their establishments and colonies has, in recent years, shown the invalidity of the model of agricultural colonization put forward by some of the historians, and the importance of analysing systems of interaction when reconstructing the Phoenician commercial and colonial dynamic in the west.

TRADE AND SPHERES OF INTERACTION

From the Tagus estuary to the Spanish Levant, the archaeological data suggest that, in the west, Phoenician trade was directed towards the territories where the indigenous communities had for some time been controlling the regional exchange networks. In general we can say that the Phoenicians restricted themselves to intervening in, making use of and stimulating a few pre-existing trading circuits in which, from the beginning of the first millennium, metals, raw materials and manufactured articles were circulating.

In order to reconstruct the history of the Phoenicians in the west, it is not enough to analyse the archaeology of their settlements and necropolises as if they were closed or static systems. Tyre's western enterprise is revealed to us as a fairly heterogeneous affair, dynamic and interrelated with the indigenous societies involved, and very far from the traditional theoretical assumptions which either reduce the Phoenician diaspora to a mere commercial adventure or else attempt to classify it within a few 'classic' preconceptions.

The natives in the west were not silent witnesses or passive agents in this historical process but their participation was as active as that of the eastern traders themselves, if not more so. It must not be forgotten that the Phoenicians had to adapt to pre-existing geographical, political and economic conditions in the regions they were colonizing. The history of these indigenous peoples – the so-called 'peoples with no history' (Wolf, 1987) – was nothing less than an integral part of Phoenician history in the west. They have long been considered to be 'barbarian' or 'primitive' peoples compared with their civilized eastern opponents, or as underdeveloped and peripheral points as against the developed centre (Tyre), but the archaeological evidence tells us that Phoenician colonization aimed precisely at those territories in the west that, having in fact surplus production and a long experience of interregional trade behind them, could supply, sustain

and guarantee the continuity of the political power of Tyre and of the great Asian states.

Thanks to the Phoenician expansion, the different regions and populations of the Mediterranean basin were linked together for the first time in the framework of intense communication and trading networks, which bound extensive zones of production and supply, as never before, with the great centres of demand for raw materials.

As the producing regions in the west took to specializing in the production of particular goods or raw materials – silver in the Huelva region, tin, lead and ivory in the Atlantic area, grain in inland Malaga, manufactured articles or scrap in the southeast and the Golfe du Lion – the indigenous communities were becoming ever more dependent on international trade, and this probably disturbed their social relations and cultural customs in the end. The part played by the native kinglets, who no doubt managed to take advantage of their social position to accumulate wealth, widen their social relations, intensify their internal trading networks and consolidate their political prerogatives, in turn fostered the appearance of relationships of subordination and tribute which, in the long run, would generate important social and economic changes in the regions of the interior. How those systems of interaction functioned and in what way the interregional exchange networks were integrated into Phoenician trade are aspects that will have to be analysed in future research.

Finally, we want to point out that, with this book, we have claimed only to proffer a new reading of the subject and to propose a theoretical framework that incorporates new instruments of analysis and applies a whole collection of new techniques and analytical methods to the study of the Phoenician expansion. The questions awaiting an answer are many and systematic excavations in the Phoenician settlements are still few. Among other things lacking are studies of the settlement pattern that would allow us to know how the colonies evolved and their mechanisms of exchange with the territory they occupied, as well as studies of geomorphology, anthracology and sedimentation and studies of indexes of land fertility and yield. We also lack quantitative analyses of the contents of the necropolises and *tophets* in the west, capable of describing objectively the social and ideological features of the colonial society in the west. Only by incorporating a wide range of analytical techniques and interdisciplinary studies shall we be able to go beyond this traditional archaeology, based exclusively on typologies of artefacts and the mere description of finds.

Appendix I

*The journey of Wen-Amon to Phoenicia**

YEAR V. IV MONTH OF THE III SEASON, DAY 16: the day on which Wen-Amon, Superior of the Forecourt of the House of Amon [Lord of the Thrones] of the Two Countries, left in search of timber for the great and august ship of Amon-Re, Sovereign of the Gods, who is in [the River called] 'User-het-Amon'. The day I arrived in Tanis, the place [where Ne-su-Ba-neb]-Ded and Ta-net-Amon were, I delivered the letters of Amon-Re, Sovereign of the Gods to them and they had (5) them read in their presence. And they said: 'I will do that which Amon-Re, Sovereign of the Gods, our [Lord] has said!' I SPENT THE IV MONTH OF THE III SEASON in Tanis. And Ne-su-Ba-neb-Ded and Ta-net-Amon despatched me with the captain of the ship, Menget-bet, and I embarked on the great Syrian sea IN THE I MONTH OF THE III SEASON, DAY I

I arrived at Dor, a city of the Tjekker, and Beder, its prince, made them send me 50 loaves, a jug of wine (10) and a leg of beef. And a man from my ship fled and stole a [vessel] of gold, [estimated] at 5 *deben*, four silver jugs, valued at 20 *deben*, and a bag of 11 silver *deben*. [The total of what] he [stole]: 5 *deben* of gold and 30 *deben* of silver.

I rose in the morning and went to the place in which the prince was, and I said to him: 'They have robbed me in your harbour. You are the prince of this land, and you are the investigator who should seek my silver. This silver belongs to Amon-Re (15), Sovereign of the Gods, lord of the countries; it belongs to Ne-su-Ba-neb-Ded; it belongs to Heri-Hor, my lord, and to other great personages in Egypt. It belongs to you; it belongs to Werret; it belongs to Mekmer; it belongs to Zakar Baal, the prince of Byblos.'

* Another English version of this text is available in J. B. Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East*, Princeton University Press, 1958, vol. I.

And he said to me: 'Though you be important and though you be eminent, take heed! I do not accept the accusation you present to me! Supposing it had been a thief from my land who went on board your ship and stole your silver, I should have compensated you from my treasury until they had (20) found that thief of yours, whomsoever he may be. But the thief who robbed you belongs to you! He belongs to your ship! Remain as my guest a few days that he may be sought.'

I stayed nine days anchored [in] his harbour, and I went to call on him and I said to him: 'Hear me, you have not found my silver. [*Let*] me [*go*] with the ships' captains and those who go [to] sea.' But he said to me: 'Be silent! . . .' . . . I went out from Tyre at break of day . . . Zakar Baal, the prince of Byblos . . . (30) ship. I found 30 *deben* of silver in it and I took possession of it. [And I said to *the Tjekker: 'I have seized*] your silver, and it will remain with me [until you find my silver or the thief] who stole it! Although you may not *have stolen, it will remain with me. But as for you, . . .' They went away and I relished my triumph in a tent [planted] on the shore of the [sea], [in] the harbour of Byblos. And* [*I hid*] Amon-of-the-Road and placed his property inside *him.*

And the [Prince] of Byblos sent me a warning, saying: 'Leave [my (35)] harbour!' And I replied to him, saying: 'Whither [*shall I go*]? . . . If [*you have a ship*] that can transport me, send me back to Egypt.' Thus passed twenty-nine days in his [harbour while] he [spent] the time sending to me daily and saying to me: 'Leave my harbour!'

THEN, WHILE HE WAS MAKING OFFERING to his gods, the god took hold of one of his young men and possessed him. And he said to him: 'Bring *[the] god*! Bring the messenger who brought him! (40) It is Amon who sent him! It is he who made him come!' And while the [young man] possessed spent that night in a frenzy, I had found a ship bound for Egypt and loaded all I had on to it. I was impatient for darkness, thinking that no sooner had it closed in than I would transfer the god on board also so that no other eye would see him, when the harbour master found me and said: 'Wait until morning, thus says the Prince.' And I said to him: 'Was it not you, by chance, who spent the time coming to me every day to say to me: "Get out [of] my harbour"? Tonight you say to me: "Wait (45) so that the ship that I have found will have sailed, and [then] you will come again [to] say to me: "Be off!"?' At that, he went away and told it to the Prince. And the Prince sent orders to the captain of the ship, saying: 'Wait until morning, thus says the Prince.'

When MORNING ARRIVED, he sent for me and bade me go up, but the god stayed in the tent where he was, on the seashore. And I found him seated [in] his high room, with his back turned to a window, so that the waves of the great Syrian sea were breaking against the back (50) of his head.

And I said to him: 'May Amon *look favourably on you*!' But he said to me: 'How long is it now since you came from the place where Amon is?' So I said: 'Five months and one day till now.' And he said to me: 'You were truthful. It is well! Where is the letter from Amon that [you should have] in your hand? Where is the message from the high priest of Amon that [you should have] in your hand?' And I spoke thus: 'I gave them to Ne-su-Ba-neb-Ded and to Ta-net-Amon.' And he was much displeased and said to me: 'Let me see! You have neither letters nor messages in your hand! Where is the ship of cedar that Ne-su-Ba-neb-Ded gave you? Where (55) is its Syrian crew? Did he not deliver you to this foreign sea captain so that he should kill you and fling you into the sea? [And then] who would they have charged with seeking the god? And you also . . . whom would they have charged with seeking you?' Thus he spoke to me.

BUT I SAID TO HIM: 'Was it an Egyptian ship or not? For indeed, the crews that sail under orders of Ne-su-Ba-neb-Ded are Egyptian! He has no Syrian crews.' And he said to me: 'Perhaps there are not twenty ships in my harbour that trade [hubŭr] with Ne-su-Ba-neb-Ded? As regards this Sidon (II 1), the other [place] through which you passed, are there not fifty more ships in it, that trade with Werket El, and are dependent on his house?' And at that I was silent for a very long time.

And he answered and said to me: 'What affairs bring you?' Thus I spoke to him: 'I came in search of timber for the great and august ship of Amon-Re, Sovereign of the gods. Your father did [it], (5) your grandfather did [it] and you also will do it!' Thus I spoke to him. But he said to me: 'Certainly they did it! And if you give me [something] for it, I shall do it. In truth, when my people fulfilled this charge, the pharaoh – life, prosperity, health! – sent six ships loaded with Egyptian merchandise and unloaded them in my storehouses. As for you, what do you bring me for your part?' And he bade them present the rolls of the annals of his fathers, and ordered them to be read in my presence, and they found a thousand *deben* of silver and all manner of things in his rolls.

(10) Therefore he said to me: 'If the ruler of Egypt were my lord, and I were his servant, he would not have sent silver and gold,

saying: "Fulfil the charge of Amon!" They would not transport a royal gift, such as was the custom to do in the case of my father. As far as I am concerned, neither am I your servant! Nor do I serve him who sent you! If I shout to Lebanon, the heavens open and the logs lie at rest [on] the seashore! Give me (15) the sails that you carry to drive your ships, that will contain the logs for [Egypt]! Give me the ropes you carry [*to fasten the*] logs [*of cedar*] that I must fell to build your . . . that I shall do for you [like] the sails of your ships, and the *spars* will be [too] heavy and will be broken, and you will die in the midst of the sea! Alas, Amon made thunder in the firmament when he placed Seth beside him! For indeed, Amon (20), when he established all the countries, on founding them, he set the land of Egypt, whence you come, before all; for the arts came out from her to reach the place in which I am. What are these stupid journeys that they oblige you to make?'

And I said to him: '[It is] not true! My errands [are] not stupid journeys! There is no boat in the River that does not belong to Amon! The sea is his, and Lebanon, of which you say "It is mine!" is his. It constitutes (25) the *nursery* of User-het-Amon, lord of [every] ship! Certainly he spoke – Amon-Re, Sovereign of the gods – and said to Heri-Hor, my lord: "Send me!" Therefore he bade me come, carrying this great god. But alas, you contrived that this great god should be anchored twenty-nine days [in] your harbour, although you were unaware [of it]. Is he not here? Is he not the [same] as he was? You are stationed [here] to continue the trade of Lebanon with Amon, its lord. About what you say that the earlier kings sent silver and gold, suppose that they had had life and health; [then] they would not have had such things sent! (30) [But] they sent them to your fathers in place of life and health. Now, as regards Amon-Re, Sovereign of the gods, he is the lord of this life and of this health, and he was the lord of your fathers. They devoted their lives to making offerings to Amon. And you, also, are the servant of Amon! If you say "Amon: Yes, I will do [it]!" and you fulfil your charge, you will live, you will be prosperous, you will be healthy and you will be a cause of wellbeing to your whole land and your people. [But] may you not desire for yourself anything belonging to Amon-Re [Sovereign of] the gods. Why, a lion wants his own property. Have your secretary come so that (35) I may dispatch him to Ne-su-Ba-neb-Ded and Ta-net-Amon, *magistrates* whom Amon designated in the north of his land, and they will order that all kinds of things be sent. I will order him to say to them: "Let it be brought until

I return again to the south", and I will [then] have occasion to pay every bit of the debt [owing to you].' Thus I spoke to him.

Therefore, I entrusted my letter to his messenger, and loaded the *keel*, the poop and the prow, with four other hewn logs besides – seven in all – and had them sent to Egypt. And in the first month of the second season, the messenger who had gone to Egypt returned to me in Syria. And Ne-su-Ba-neb-Ded and Ta-net-Amon sent: (40) 4 crocks and 1 *kak-men* of gold; 5 silver jugs, 10 garments of royal linen; 10 *kherd* of good linen from Upper Egypt; 500 rolls of finished papyrus, 500 cowhides; 500 ropes; 20 bags of lentils and 30 baskets of fish. And she handed to me [personally]: 5 garments of fine linen from Upper Egypt; 5 *kherd* of fine linen from Upper Egypt; one bag of lentils and 5 baskets of fish.

And the Prince rejoiced and he detailed three hundred men and three hundred beasts and appointed supervisors over them that they should fell the trees. Therefore they cut them down and they were there in the second season.

In the third month of the third season, they dragged them [to] the seashore and the Prince appeared and stopped beside them. And he ordered me to be called (45) saying: 'Come!' When I presented myself to him, the shadow of his lotus flower fell on me. And Pen-Amon, a majordomo belonging to him, stopped me short, saying: 'The shadow of the pharaoh – life, prosperity, health! – your lord, has covered you.' But he was displeased with him and said: 'Leave him in peace!'

Therefore I approached him and he answered and said: 'Now, the charge that my fathers accomplished formerly, I have accomplished it [also], although you have not done for me what your fathers would have done and what you too [should have done]! Now, the last part of your timber has arrived and is [here]. Satisfy my desire and load it: perchance they will not give it to you? (50) Do not contemplate the terror of the sea! If you contemplate the terror of the sea, you will see mine [likewise]! In truth, I did not do with you what I did to the messengers of Ha-em-Waset, who spent seventeen years in this land: they died [where] they were!' And he said to his majordomo: 'Take him and show him the *tomb* in which they lie.'

But I said: 'Let it not be shown to me! As regards Ha-em-Waset, he sent you men as messengers, and he himself was a man. You do not have one of his messengers [in me], to whom you may say: "Go and see your companions!" Now then, you should rejoice (55) and order that a stele be raised for you, saying on it: "Amon-Re, Sovereign of the gods, sent me Amon of the Road, his messenger – life prosperity,

health! – and Wen-Amon, his human messenger, in search of timber for the great and august ship of Amon-Re, Sovereign of the gods. I felled it. I transported it. I provided it with my ships and my crews. I ensured that they will arrive in Egypt, so as to beg Amon for fifty years of life for myself over and above my destiny." And it may happen that, in the fulness of time, a messenger may arrive from the land of Egypt, who knows writing and will read your name on the stele. And you will receive water [in] the West, like the gods who are (60) there!'

And he said to me: 'What you have said to me is a great testimony of words!' So I said to him: 'Concerning the many things you have said to me, if I reach the place where the high priest of Amon is and he sees how [you have performed this] charge, it will be [the performing of this] charge that *will obtain* something for you.'

And I went [to] the seashore, to the place where the timber was, and I espied eleven ships of the Tjekker coming in from the sea intending to say: 'Take him! Prevent his ship from [going] to the land of Egypt!' Then I sat down and wept. And the scribe of the Prince came to me (65) and said: 'What is the matter?' And I said to him: 'Have you not seen that the birds are descending on Egypt a second time? Look at them! How they travel to the fresh pools! [But] how long shall I be here! Do you not observe that they are coming again to take me?'

Therefore he went to refer the matter to the Prince. And the Prince started to weep because of the words that were spoken to him, because they were pitiful. And he sent me his scribe and he brought me two jugs of wine and a sheep. And he sent me Ta-net-not, an Egyptian songstress, who was with him, saying: 'Sing for him! Do not allow his heart to be distressed!' And he sent (70) to me to say: 'Eat and drink! Do not allow your heart to be distressed, for tomorrow you will hear what I have to say.'

The morning came, he called together his assembly, and he stood up in the midst of it and said to the Tjekker: '[Why] did you come?' And they said to him: 'We came to harass the *accursed* ships that you are sending to Egypt with our adversaries!' But he said to them: 'I cannot take the messenger of Amon into my land. Let him depart and then pursue him and capture him.'

Therefore I embarked and set out from the sea harbour. And the wind drove me to the land [of] Alashiya. And the men of the city came out to kill me, but *a way opened for me* between them to the place where Heteb, the princess of the city, was. I met her when she was leaving one of her houses and entering another.

And so, I saluted her and said to the people she had around her: 'Does nobody among you understand Egyptian?' And one of them said: 'I understand [it].' Therefore I said to him: 'Inform my lady that I heard, in distant Thebes, where Amon is found, that injustice is perpetrated in all cities, but, instead, in the country of Alashiya, justice is done. But, here injustices are committed daily!' And she said: 'What! What do you [mean] (80) by your words?' And I said: 'If the sea is stormy and the wind throws me on to your land, you should not consent that *they take* me to kill me, for I am a messenger of Amon.

'Hear me, as for me, they will still seek me to assassinate me! As for this crew of the Prince of Byblos, whom they are preparing to kill, shall not their lord find ten of your crews, which he will kill?'

She summoned the people, who came together. And she said to me: 'Spend the night . . .'

(The papyrus breaks off at this point. It is permissible to conclude that Wen-Amon returned safely or successfully to Egypt, since the story is told in the first person.)

Appendix II

Oracles against Tyre

Isaiah

Oracle on Tyre

23 [1] Oracle on Tyre:
Howl, ships of Tarshish,
for your fortress has been destroyed.
They learn the news
on their way from the land of Kittim.
[2] Be struck dumb, you inhabitants of the coast,
you merchants of Sidon,
whose goods travelled over the sea,
over wide oceans.
[3] The grain of Nile, the harvest of the river,
formed her revenues,
as she marketed it throughout the world.
[4] Blush, Sidon,
for thus speaks the sea,
'I have not laboured nor given birth,
not reared young men
nor brought up young girls.'
[5] When the Egyptians learn the fate of Tyre,
they will be appalled.
[6] Take ship for Tarshish, howl,
you inhabitants of the coast.
[7] Is this your joyful city
founded far back in the past?
Whose footsteps led her abroad
to found her own colonies?
[8] Who took this decision
against imperial Tyre,
whose traders were princes,
whose merchants, the great ones of the world?

9 Yahweh Sabaoth took this decision
to humble the pride of all her beauty
and humiliate the great ones of the world.
10 Till the soil, daughter of Tarshish,
the harbour is no more,
11 He has stretched his hand over the sea
to overthrow its kingdoms;
Yahweh has ordained the destruction
of the fortresses of Canaan.
12 He has said: Rejoice no more,
ravished one,
virgin daughter of Sidon.
Get up and take ship for Kittim;
no respite for you there, either.
13 Look at the land of Kittim . . .
They have set up towers.
They have demolished its bastions
and reduced it to ruins.
14 Howl, ships of Tarshish,
for your fortress has been destroyed.

The subjection of Tyre

15 That day, Tyre will be forgotten for seventy years. But in the reign of another king, at the end of the seventy years, Tyre will become like the whore in the song:

16 Take your lyre, walk the town
forgotten whore.
Play your sweetest, sing your songs again,
to make them remember you.

17 At the end of the seventy years Yahweh will visit Tyre. Once again she will begin to receive the pay for her whoring. She will play the whore with all the kingdoms on the surface or the earth. 18 But her profits and wages will be dedicated to Yahweh and not stored or hoarded. Her profits will go to buy abundant food and splendid clothes for those who live in the presence of Yahweh.

Ezekiel

Against Tyre

26 1 In the eleventh year, on the first of the month, the word of Yahweh was addressed to me as follows:

2 'Son of man, since Tyre has jeered at Jerusalem,
"Aha! It is shattered, that gate of nations;
it is opening to me; its wealth is ruined",
3 very well, the Lord Yahweh says this:
Now, Tyre, I set myself against you.
I mean to cause many nations to surge against you
like the sea and its waves.
4 They will destroy the walls of Tyre,
they will demolish her towers;
I will sweep away her dust
and leave her a naked rock.
5 She will be a drying-ground in mid-ocean for fishing nets.
For I have spoken – it is the Lord Yahweh who speaks –
she will be the prey of the nations.
6 As for her daughters on the mainland,
these will be put to the sword,
and everyone will learn that I am Yahweh.
7 For the Lord Yahweh says this.
From the North, I am sending Nebuchadnezzar,
king of Babylon, king of kings, against Tyre
with horses and chariots and horsemen,
a horde of many races.
8 He will put your daughters
on the mainland to the sword.
He will build siege-works against you,
cast up a mound against you,
raise a siege-tower against you;
9 he will break down your walls with his battering-rams,
and demolish your towers with his siege-engines.
10 His horses are so many their dust will hide you.
Noise of his horsemen and his chariots and wagons
will make your walls tremble as he rides through your gates
like a man entering a conquered city.
11 His horses' hoofs will trample through your streets;
he will put your people to the sword,
and throw your massive pillars to the ground.
12 Your wealth will be seized, your merchandise looted,
your walls razed, your luxurious houses shattered,
your stones, your timbers, your very dust, thrown into the sea.
13 I will stop your music and songs;
the sound of your harps will not be heard again.
14 I will reduce you to a naked rock
and make you into a drying-ground for fishing nets,

never to be rebuilt;
for I, Yahweh, have spoken
– it is the Lord Yahweh who speaks.

15 'The Lord Yahweh says this to Tyre: When they hear of your fall,
the groans of your wounded and the havoc inside your walls, will not
the island shake?
16 'The rulers of the sea will all get off their thrones, lay aside their
cloaks and take off their embroidered robes. Dressed in terror they
will sit on the ground unable to stop trembling, terrified at your fate.
17 'They will raise a dirge and say to you:

"You are destroyed then, swept from the seas,
city of pride,
you who were mighty on the sea,
you and your citizens,
who used to terrorise
the continent far and near.
18 Now the islands are trembling
on the day of your fall;
the islands of the sea are terrified by your end."

19 'For the Lord Yahweh says this:
'When I make you as desolate as any depopulated city, when I bring
up the deep against you and the ocean covers you, 20I will cast you
down with those who go down to the pit, down to the men of old; I
will make you live in the regions underground, in the eternal solitudes,
with those who go down to the pit, so that you can never come back
and be restored to the land of the living. 21I will make you an object of
terror; you will not exist. People will look for you and never find you
again – it is the Lord Yahweh who speaks.'

A lamentation over the fall of Tyre

27 1The word of Yahweh was addressed to me as follows, 2'Son of
man, raise the dirge over Tyre. 3Say to Tyre, that city standing at the
edge of the sea, doing business with the nations in innumerable
islands, "The Lord Yahweh says this:

Tyre, you used to say: I am a ship
perfect in beauty.
4 Your frontiers stretched far out to sea;
those who built you made you
perfect in beauty.

5 Cypress from Senir they used
for all your planking.
They took a cedar from Lebanon
to make you a mast.
6 From the tallest oaks of Bashan
they made your oars.
They built you a deck of cedar inlaid with ivory
from the Kittim isles.
7 Embroidered linen of Egypt was used for your sail
and for your flag.
Purple and scarlet from the Elishah islands
formed your deck-tent.
8 Men from Sidon and from Arvad
were your oarsmen,
Your sages, Tyre, were aboard
serving as sailors.
9 The elders and craftsmen of Gebal were there
to caulk your seams.

All the ships of the sea and the sailors in them visited you to trade with you. [10]Men of Persia and Lud and Put served in your army and were your warriors. They hung up shield and helmet in you. They brought you glory. [11]The sons of Arvad and their army manned your walls all round and kept watch from your bastions. They hung their shields all round your walls and helped to make your beauty perfect. [12]Tarshish was your client, profiting from your abundant wealth. People paid you in silver and iron, tin and lead for your merchandise. [13]Javan, Tubal and Meshech traded with you. For your merchandise they bartered men and bronze implements. [14]The people of Bethtogarmah traded you horses, chargers, mules. [15]The sons of Dedan traded with you; many shores were your clients; you were paid in ivory tusks and ebony. [16]Edom was your client, because of the variety and quantity of your goods; she exchanged carbuncles, purple, embroideries, fine linen, coral and rubies against your goods. [17]Judah and the land of Israel also traded with you, supplying you with corn from Minnith, wax, honey, tallow and balm. [18]Damascus was your client, because of the plentifulness of your goods and the immensity of your wealth, furnishing you with wine from Helbon and wool from Zahar. [19]Dan and Javan, from Uzal onwards, supplied you with wrought iron, cassia and calamus in exchange for your goods. [20]Dedan traded with you in horse-cloths. [21]Arabia and even the sheikhs of Kedar were all your clients; they paid in lambs, rams and

he-goats. [22]The merchants of Sheba and Raamah traded with you;
they supplied you with the best quality spices, precious stones and
gold against your goods. [23]Haran, Canneh and Eden, traders of
Sheba, Asshur and Chilmad traded with you. [24]They traded rich
clothes, embroidered and purple cloaks, multi-coloured materials and
strong plaited cords in your markets. [25]The ships of Tarshish crossed
the seas for your trade.

Then you were rich and glorious
surrounded by the seas.
[26] Out to the open sea
your oarsmen rowed you.
The east wind has shattered you,
surrounded by the seas.
[27] Your riches, your goods, your cargo,
your crew, your sailors,
your caulkers, your commercial agents,
all the soldiers
you carry with you the whole host
who are aboard:
all will sink surrounded by the seas
on the day of your shipwreck.

[28] When they hear the cries of your sailors
the coasts will tremble.
[29] Then the oarsmen will all desert
their ships.
The sailors and seafaring people
will stay ashore.
[30] They will raise their voices for you,
and weep bitterly.
They will throw dust on their heads,
and roll in ashes;
[31] they will shave their heads for you,
and put sackcloth round their waists.
They will raise a bitter dirge over you,
in their despair;
[32] They will raise a dirge and mourn for you,
they will bewail you:
Who could compare with haughty Tyre
surrounded by the seas?
[33] When you unloaded your goods
to satisfy so many peoples,

you made the kings of the earth rich
with your excess of wealth and goods.
34 Now you are shattered by the waves,
surrounded by the seas.
Your cargo and all your crew
have foundered with you.
35 All those who live in the distant islands
have been horrified at your fate.
Their kings have been panic-stricken,
their faces quite cast down.
36 The traders of the nations
have whistled at your fate,
since you have become an object of dread,
gone for ever."'

Against the king of Tyre

28 [1]The word of Yahweh was addressed to me as follows, [2]'Son of man, tell the ruler of Tyre, "The Lord Yahweh says this:

Being swollen with pride,
you have said: I am a god;
I am sitting on the throne of God,
surrounded by the seas.
Though you are a man and not a god,
you consider yourself the equal of God.
3 You are wiser now than Daniel;
there is no sage as wise as you.
4 By your wisdom and your intelligence
you have amassed great wealth;
you have piles of gold and silver
inside your treasure-houses.
5 Such is your skill in trading,
your wealth has continued to increase,
and with this your heart has grown more arrogant.
6 And so, the Lord Yahweh says this:
Since you consider yourself the equal of God,
7 very well, I am going to bring foreigners against you,
the most barbarous of the nations.
They will draw sword against your fine wisdom,
they will defile your glory;
8 they will throw you down into the pit
and you will die a violent death
surrounded by the seas.

9 Are you still going to say: I am a god,
when your murderers confront you?
No, you are a man and not a god
in the clutches of your murderers!
10 You will die like the uncircumcised
at the hand of foreigners.
For I have spoken – it is the Lord Yahweh who speaks."'

The fall of the king of Tyre

28 11The word of Yahweh was addressed to me as follows, 12'Son of man, raise a dirge over the king of Tyre. Say to him, "The Lord Yahweh says this:

You were once an exemplar of perfection,
full of wisdom,
perfect in beauty;
13 you were in Eden, in the garden of God.
A thousand gems formed your mantle.
Sard, topaz, diamond, chrysolite, onyx,
jasper, sapphire, carbuncle, emerald,
the gold of which your flutes and tambourines are made,
all were prepared on the day of your creation.
14 I had provided you with a guardian cherub;
you were on the holy mountain of God;
you walked amid red-hot coals.
15 Your behaviour was exemplary from the day of your creation
until the day when evil was first found in you.
16 Your busy trading
has filled you with violence and sin.
I have thrown you down from the mountain of God,
and the guardian cherub has destroyed you from amid the coals.
17 Your heart has grown swollen with pride
on account of your beauty.
You have corrupted your wisdom
owing to your splendour.
I have thrown you to the ground;
I have made you a spectacle for other kings.
18 By the immense number of your sins,
by the dishonesty of your trading,
you have defiled your sanctuaries.
I have brought fire out of you to consume you.
I have made you ashes on the ground
before the eyes of all who saw you.

19 Of the nations, all who know you
are lost in amazement over you.
You are an object of terror;
gone for ever."'

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Appendix III

Radiometric datings

The conventional chronology of the first millennium BC and, in particular, of the Phoenician colonization, is based essentially on three types of interrelated sources of information: datings established by the classical historians, the dates provided by late geometric, geometric and ancient Greek ceramics using the chronology established for the Greek colonies of Magna Graecia, and the typological sequences of some of the Phoenician ceramics in the Phoenician colonies in the west – red-glazed plates, amphorae, etc. – which in turn are dated from imported Greek ceramics – proto-Corinthian, Euboean, Greco-oriental and Attic. Consequently there is a lack of absolute or calendar datings to fix events more accurately and there are serious doubts about the feasibility of dating a historical process of such magnitude exclusively from imported objects, when their adjusted chronology has for some time been furnishing conflicting evidence (cf. Saltz, 1978; Manning and Weninger, 1992; James, 1993).

Carbon 14 dating and its subsequent dendrochronological calibration constitutes one of the most important instrumental techniques for determining chronology in prehistory. For the first millennium BC the radiometric datings give rise so far to no greater problems than those stemming from incorrect extraction of the samples, contamination of those same samples or else from an unchecked archaeological context. The carbon 14 method and its calibration by dendrochronology at least offers much greater precision of timing than the conventional methods of dating such as the archaeologico-stratigraphic or the typological methods. As things stand, only dendrochronology supplies the reference point or correction factor necessary for transforming C-14 datings into real or calendar dates. For that, measurements made on the growth rings of certain trees – oak, pine, sequoia – have not only confirmed the existence of considerable variations in the levels of C-14 in the atmosphere in past times, but, for the first time in the 1970s and

1980s, they have made it possible to establish calibration curves or graphic representations of the datings obtained from tree samples of different ages, comparing them with real or calendar ages.

Among the calibration tables, the most internationally accepted high-precision curve is that of Pearson and Stuiver (1986), which serves to reaffirm the agreements signed immediately after the last international Congresses devoted to C-14, and has universal value, combining the dendrochronological data obtained in the United States with those from European measurements.

In this case, we have performed the dendrochronological calibration of the carbon 14 dates in accordance with Pearson and Stuiver's high-precision curve, using the program CA-LIB (*Radiocarbon Calibration Program*) 3.0.3c (Mac Test Version 9) kindly provided by Paula J. Reimer of the University of Washington. The program has been devised and fine-tuned by the University of Washington (Seattle) on the basis of the program designed by Stuiver and Reimer (1986) and revised in 1993 (Stuiver and Reimer, 1993; Stuiver and Becker, 1993), which converts conventional radiocarbon datings into calibrated calendar dates.

The calibration curve has several 'wiggles' in it which means that every C-14 date always appears associated with its probability value. The calibration obtained corresponds to the matching of the conventional date with the calibration curve. Occasionally several matchings with the wiggles on the curve occur and the actual date is obtained from the related interval of probability (one or two standard deviations of the calibrated curve).

Although we have only a very small number of absolute dates for the Phoenician colonization, we think the moment has come to bring them together and establish a more accurate reference base for future discussions of the question. The conventional carbon-14 dates are expressed in years BP (Before Present) while the calibrated age is expressed in years BC (Before Christ).

In this section we are gathering together only the radiometric dates from the Iberian Peninsula, which constitute at present the largest assemblage in the whole of the Mediterranean as far as the Phoenician colonization is concerned. One group of datings corresponds to the Phoenician establishments proper, with reference both to the ancient period and to the so-called Punic period. Outstandingly important are the radiometric datings from Morro de Mezquitilla, a site that has so far yielded one of the earliest archaeological assemblages of the

Table 3 *Radiometric datings from the Iberian*

Site	Region	Phase	Archaeological context
Morro de Mezquitilla	Malaga coast	Phoenician	Earliest Phoenician level, trench VIII
Morro de Mezquitilla	Malaga coast	Phoenician	Earliest Phoenician level, B1
Morro de Mezquitilla	Malaga coast	Phoenician	Upper level B1a, kilns 3 & 4
Morro de Mezquitilla	Malaga coast	Phoenician	Upper level B1a, kilns 3 & 4
Morro de Mezquitilla	Malaga coast	Phoenician	Final level B2
Morro de Mezquitilla	Malaga coast	Punic	Level C section 13
Morro de Mezquitilla	Malaga coast	Punic	Level C section 13
Toscanos	Malaga coast	Phoenician	Level I
Toscanos	Malaga coast	Phoenician	Level IVa
Toscanos	Malaga coast	Phoenician	Houses E & G
Jardín	Malaga coast	Punic	Tomb 22
Jardín	Malaga coast	Punic	Tomb 8
Acinipo	Malaga interior	orientalizing	Round hut
Acinipo	Malaga interior	orientalizing	On round & rectangular houses
Acinipo	Malaga interior	orientalizing	On round & rectangular houses
Cerro de la Mora	*Vega* de Granada	orientalizing	Layer 42, phase Ib–II
Cerro de la Mora	*Vega* de Granada	orientalizing	Table 3, phase Ib–II
Cerro de la Mora	*Vega* de Granada	orientalizing	Layer 9, phase Ib–II
Cerro de los Infantes	*Vega* de Granada	orientalizing	?
Peña Negra	southeast	orientalizing	Phase II level IE, area A3 sector VII
Peña Negra	southeast	orientalizing	Phase II house profile bulldozer, sector V
Peña Negra	southeast	orientalizing	Phase II, lower level megaron. Section I
Peña Negra	southeast	orientalizing	Phase II level IC–D, area B1, sector VII
Peña Negra	southeast	orientalizing	Phase II level I, area D-4, sector IB
Peña Negra	southeast	orientalizing	Phase II level IAB, area A1, sector VII
Aldovesta	Lower Ebro	orientalizing	?
Setefilla	Lower Guadalquivir	orientalizing	Village, section 3, stratum XIIA
Setefilla	Lower Guadalquivir	orientalizing	Village, section 3, stratum IX
Medellin	Estremadura	orientalizing	Village
Medellin	Estremadura	orientalizing	Village
Medellin	Estremadura	orientalizing	Village
Medellin	Estremadura	orientalizing	Necropolis, area 3A, assemblage 8
Medellin	Estremadura	orientalizing	Necropolis, phase I, assemblage 11
Medellin	Estremadura	orientalizing	Necropolis, phase I, lower 1
Medellin	Estremadura	orientalizing	Necropolis, phase II, assemblage 12
Medellin	Estremadura	orientalizing	Necropolis, phase II, assemblage 20
Medellin	Estremadura	orientalizing	Necropolis, phase II, assemblage 3
Medellin	Estremadura	orientalizing	Necropolis, phase II, assemblage 3
Medellin	Estremadura	orientalizing	Necropolis, phase II, assemblage 20
Medellin	Estremadura	orientalizing	Necropolis, phase III, assemblage 9c
Cancho Roano	Estremadura	orientalizing	Dwelling 5

Peninsula from Phoenician colonization to the Punic period

Sample	Laboratory	C-14(BP)	Prob. Int.	Intersection	Bibliography
Wood	B-4178	2750 ± 50	919–826	cal BC 894–835	Schubart 1983, p. 130
?	?	2460 ± 30	815–790	cal BC 801	Schubart 1982, pp. 81–82
?	B-4181	3160 ± 50	1459–1374	cal BC 1429–1411	Schubart 1983, p. 130
?	B-4180	2570 ± 50	804–588	cal BC 786	Schubart 1983, p. 130
?	B-4175	2560 ± 50	799–588	cal BC 771	Schubart 1983, p. 130
Wood	B-4173	2360 ± 40	517–361	cal BC 399	Schubart 1983, p. 130
Wood	B-4174	2340 ± 50	413–354	cal BC 395	Schubart 1983, p. 130
Wood	H-2276–1766	2620 ± 140	902–751	cal BC 795	Almagro Gorbea, 1970, p. 23
Wood	KN-?	2580 ± 120	827–519	cal BC 788	Almagro Gorbea, 1972, p. 233
Wood	KN-?	2270 ± 120	413–156	cal BC 362–363	Almagro Gorbea, 1972, p. 233
Carbon	GrN-6831	2500 ± 35	659–519	cal BC 759–453	Almagro Gorbea, 1976, p. 312
Carbon	GrN-6830	2415 ± 30	691–401	cal BC 409	Almagro Gorbea, 1976, p. 312
Carbon	I-?	2770 ± 90	974–825	cal BC 899	Aguayo *et al.*, 1989, p. 311
Carbon	I-?	2650 ± 90	919–758	cal BC 804	Aguayo *et al.*, 1989, p. 311
Carbon	I-?	2640 ± 180	942–516	cal BC 801	Aguayo *et al.*, 1989, p. 311
Carbon	UGRA-235	2740 ± 90	944–801	cal BC 890–833	González *et al.*, 1987, p. 384
Carbon	UGRA-231	2670 ± 100	943–760	cal BC 809	González *et al.*, 1987, p. 384
Carbon	UGRA-232	2670 ± 90	938–763	cal BC 809	González *et al.*, 1987, p. 384
?	UGRA-111	2580 ± 140	829–516	cal BC 788	González *et al.*, 1985, p. 611
Carbon	GaK-9773	3200 ± 120	1564–1368	cal BC 1449	González Prats, 1983, p. 292
Carbon	GaK-9774	2810 ± 140	1109–811	cal BC 970–925	González Prats, 1983, p. 292
Carbon	CSIC-392	2570 ± 50	804–588	cal BC 786	González Prats, 1983, p. 290
Carbon	CSIC-412	2350 ± 50	483–357	cal BC 397	González Prats, 1983, p. 291
Carbon	CSIC-414	2280 ± 50	392–231	cal BC 376–265	González Prats, 1983, p. 291
Bones	CSIC-454	2200 ± 50	355–196	cal BC 347–206	González Prats, 1983, p. 291
Carbon	UBAR-90	2360 ± 60	519–358	cal BC 399	Mestres *et al.*, 1991, p. 359
Carbon	I-11068	2560 ± 125	809–517	cal BC 771	Aubet *et al.*, 1983, p. 49
Carbon	I-11067	2490 ± 90	764–516	cal BC 757–450	Aubet *et al.*, 1983, p. 49
Carbon	CSIC-84b	2290 ± 110	429–167	cal BC 382	Almagro Gorbea, 1978, p. 168
Carbon	CSIC-84	2280 ± 110	414–165	cal BC 376–265	Almagro Gorbea, 1978, p. 168
Carbon	CSIC-85	2280 ± 110	414–165	cal BC 376–265	Almagro Gorbea, 1978, p. 168
Wood	CSIC-36	2550 ± 110	801–519	cal BC 769	Almagro Gorbea, 1970, p. 24
Wood	CSIC-86	2500 ± 110	769–516	cal BC 759–453	Almagro Gorbea, 1977, p. 391
Carbon	CSIC-52	2490 ± 110	765–515	cal BC 757–450	Almagro Gorbea, 1977, p. 391
Wood	CSIC-87	2490 ± 110	765–515	cal BC 757–450	Almagro Gorbea, 1977, p. 391
Carbon	CSIC-51	2480 ± 110	762–500	cal BC 755–448	Almagro Gorbea, 1977, p. 391
Carbon	CSIC-49	2450 ± 110	759–457	cal BC 670–429	Almagro Gorbea, 1977, p. 391
Wood	CSIC-35	2440 ± 110	758–457	cal BC 499–413	Almagro Gorbea, 1970, p. 24
Carbon	GrN-6170	2420 ± 35	698–457	cal BC 476–410	Almagro Gorbea, 1977, p. 391
	CSIC-50	2380 ± 110	758–360	cal BC 403	Almagro Gorbea, 1977, p. 391
Carbon	UBAR-19	2720 ± 100	973–791	cal BC 830	Mestres *et al.*, 1991, pp. 355–356

Table 3 (*cont.*)

Site	Region	Phase	Archaeological context
Cancho Roano	Estremadura	orientalizing	?
Cancho Roano	Estremadura	orientalizing	Eastern patio, paving
Cancho Roano	Estremadura	orientalizing	Dwelling 6
Cancho Roano	Estremadura	orientalizing	Sector 3
Cancho Roano	Estremadura	orientalizing	Sector 3
Cancho Roano	Estremadura	orientalizing	Sector 3
Cancho Roano	Estremadura	orientalizing	Dwelling 8
Cancho Roano	Estremadura	orientalizing	Sector 3
Cancho Roano	Estremadura	orientalizing	Dwelling 8
Cancho Roano	Estremadura	orientalizing	Sector 3
Alcáçova de Santarém	Portuguese Estremadura	orientalizing	Phase I
Alcáçova de Santarém	Portuguese Estremadura	orientalizing	Phase II
Quinta do Almaraz	Tagus Estuary	orientalizing	?
Quinta do Almaraz	Tagus Estuary	orientalizing	?
Rocha Branca	Algarve	orientalizing	Lower level
Rocha Branca	Algarve	orientalizing	Lower level
Rocha Branca	Algarve	orientalizing	Lower level
Rocha Branca	Algarve	orientalizing	Lower level

ample	Laboratory	C-14(BP)	Prob. Int.	Intersection	Bibliography
arbon	UBAR-18	2710 ± 100	973–788	cal BC 828	Mestres *et al.*, 1991, pp. 355–356
arbon	UBAR-9	2650 ± 70	900–764	cal BC 804	Mestres *et al.*, 1991, pp. 355–356
arbon	UBAR-8	2620 ± 100	845–587	cal BC 795	Mestres *et al.*, 1991, pp. 355–356
arbon	UBAR-22	2520 ± 120	790–516	cal BC 763–593	Mestres *et al.*, 1991, pp. 355–356
arbon	UBAR-23	2500 ± 100	768–516	cal BC 759–453	Mestres *et al.*, 1991, pp. 355–356
arbon	UBAR-29	2470 ± 100	760–480	cal BC 753–435	Mestres *et al.*, 1991, pp. 355–356
arbon	UBAR-17	2450 ± 60	757–459	cal BC 670–429	Mestres *et al.*, 1991, pp. 355–356
arbon	UBAR-14	2440 ± 90	757–459	cal BC 499–413	Mestres *et al.*, 1991, pp. 355–356
arbon	UBAR-27	2360 ± 100	755–354	cal BC 399	Mestres *et al.*, 1991, pp. 355–356
heat	UBAR-37	2330 ± 90	519–116	cal BC 393	Mestres *et al.*, 1991, pp. 355–356
arbon	ICEN-532	2640 ± 50	831–769	cal BC 801	Arruda, 1993, p. 198
arbon	ICEN-525	2470 ± 70	759–497	cal BC 753–435	Arruda, 1993, p. 200
ones	ICEN-926	2660 ± 50	834–787	cal BC 807	Barros *et al.*, 1993, p. 167
hells	ICEN-914	2640 ± 50	831–769	cal BC 801	Barros *et al.*, 1993, p. 167
arbon	?	3010 ± 45	1315–1208	cal BC 1256–1134	Varela Gomes, 1993, p. 83
arbon	?	2650 ± 60	837–767	cal BC 804	Varela Gomes, 1993, p. 83
arbon	?	2570 ± 45	803–589	cal BC 786	Varela Gomes, 1993, p. 83
ood	?	2450 ± 45	756–460	cal BC 670–429	Varela Gomes, 1993, p. 83

western Mediterranean. Two datings (B-4178 and B-?) correspond to the earliest stratum of the Phoenician settlement (Schubart, 1982, pp. 81–82; 1983, p. 130; 1985, p. 167), or level A/B1. For the upper stratum in the area of the metallurgical workshops, which has been dated conventionally to the first half of the eighth century BC, two dates have been obtained (B-4180 and B-4181), corresponding to stratum B1 (Schubart, 1983, p. 130; 1985, p. 167), of which the earliest (B-4181) assuredly comes from the pre-Phoenician Copper/Bronze Age village. Lastly, one date (B-4175) corresponds to the very end of the second phase of the Phoenician settlement (B2) and two others (B-4173 and B-4174) correspond to traces of fire in the Punic stratum (C) of the site (Schubart, 1983, pp. 130–131; 1985, p. 167).

For the Phoenician establishment at Toscanos we have three radiometric datings: one of them (H-2276-1766) comes from a sample of carbonized wood recovered from stratum I in the southwest of sector V of the 1964 campaign (Almagro Gorbea, 1970, p. 23) which corresponds to the earliest Phoenician level on the site; another (Kn-TM2) comes from level IVa, corresponding to the peak period at Toscanos, and the third (Kn-TM4) corresponds to the area of houses E and G and is rather imprecise (Almagro Gorbea, 1972, pp. 233 and 240).

The two dates from the Jardín necropolis are particularly interesting because they are in line with the Punic context ascribed to the assemblage, which has been dated conventionally to the sixth to fourth centuries BC. The earlier of the two datings (GrN-6831) corresponds to tomb 22 (Almagro Gorbea, 1976, p. 312), lying in the far south of trench 6 and in the area that yielded the earliest finds from the necropolis. So we may say that the radiometric dating of tomb 22 corresponds broadly to the start of the use of the Punic necropolis after the abandonment of the ancient necropolis of Toscanos, located at Cerro del Mar.

The rest of the datings correspond to indigenous sites in the southeast, the Ebro valley, the lower Guadalquivir, Estremadura and Portugal, which seem to be linked directly with Phoenician trade. The sites selected are those that show clear 'orientalizing' elements and those archaeological contexts in which Phoenician imports from the coast are found. The dates from Acinipo, in the interior of Malaga province, are notable for their importance and antiquity; this is one of the first indigenous sites in the hinterland to show contact with the Phoenician colonies on the coast (Aguayo *et al.*, 1989, pp. 309–314; Carrilero, 1992, p. 136). Notable too are the dates from the villages on the *vega* of Granada, such as Cerro de los Infantes at Pinos Puente

(Mendoza, Molina, Arteaga and Aguayo, 1981) and Cerro de la Mora at Moraleda de Zafayona (Carrasco, Pastor and Pachón, 1981; 1985).

For various reasons, we have discarded the radiometric datings obtained in minero-metallurgical regions of Huelva province: the only radiocarbon dating obtained in the mines at Rio Tinto (BM-85 = 2400 + 50 BP) comes from remains of wood from a Roman waterwheel (Almagro Gorbea, 1978, p. 174) and the six carbon-14 datings obtained in the copper mines at Chinflón cover much too wide a time scale (cal. BC 1370–490) to relate them exclusively to Phoenician trade (cf. Pellicer and Hurtado, 1980; Burleigh, Ambers and Matthews, 1982, p. 252; 1984, p. 71).

On the Mediterranean face there is the important series of radiometric datings from the indigenous village of Peña Negra at Crevillente (Alicante) (González Prats, 1983) and the one obtained at Aldovesta on the lower Ebro (Mascort, Sanmartí and Santacana, 1991).

In the Tartessian area and Estremadura, the dates from Setefilla, in the Seville region (Aubet *et al.*, 1983), from the village and necropolis of Medellín (Almagro Gorbea, 1977) and from the palace-sanctuary of Cancho Roano at Zalamea de la Serena (Badajoz) (Celestino and Jiménez, 1993) are very interesting.

Lastly, there is a connection to the datings obtained from Iron Age settlements in the Atlantic region of Portugal and in particular those from the earliest level with Phoenician imports from the villages of Alcáçova de Santarém in Portuguese Estremadura (Arruda, 1993), Quinta do Almaraz on the lower Tagus (Barros, Cardoso and Sabrosa, 1993) and Rocha Branca at Silves, Algarve (Cardoso, 1993; Varela Gomes, 1993).

The thermo-luminescence dates obtained on pottery samples from the earliest level at Cabezo de San Pedro (915 BC ± 50; 1850 ± 100 BC), in Huelva, and from Tejada la Vieja (1622 ± 90 BC, 2046 ± 190 BC) are not incorporated because they do not provide an absolute match with the original archaeological context (cf. Fernández Jurado, 1987, p. 273). Also excluded for statistical and diagrammatic reasons are some of the radiocarbon datings, like one from Morro de Mezquitilla (3160 ± 50 BP), another from Toscanos (2270 ± 120 BP), two from Peña Negra (3200 ± 120 and 2810 ± 140 BP) and one from Rocha Branca (3010 ± 45 BP), either because they show a very high type of deviation, because of laboratory errors or because serious doubts exist about their original archaeological context.

In Table 3 we present in a summary and schematic form the radiometric datings from the Iberian Peninsula that correspond to the

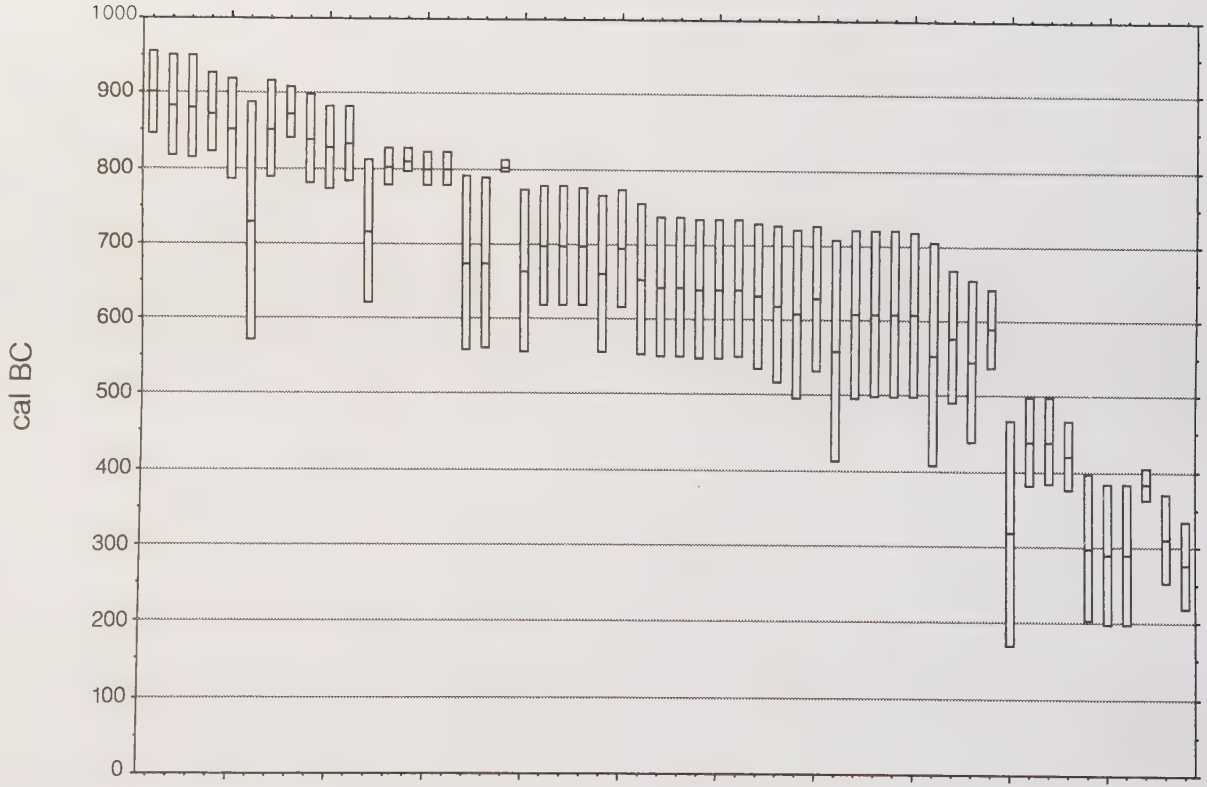

Fig. 105 Phoenicio-Punic radiometric series from the Iberian Peninsula

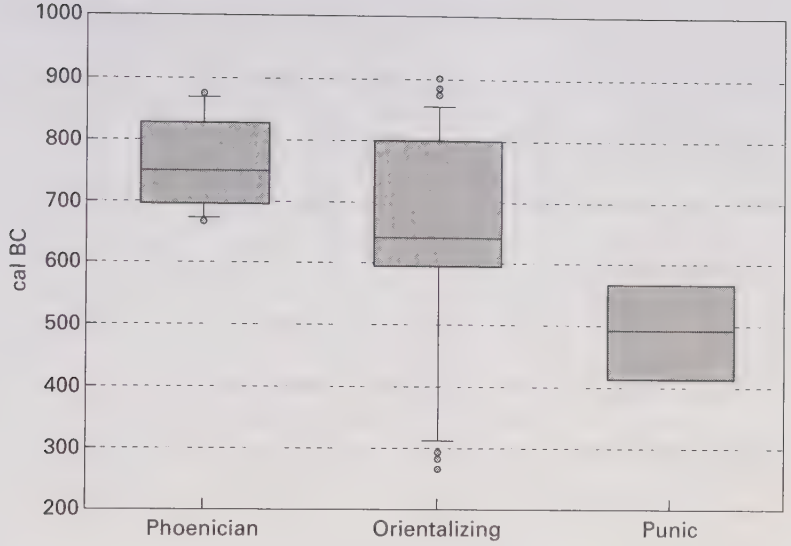

Fig. 106 Comparison between specific series of datings

Phoenician colonial world, to the 'orientalizing' horizon and to the Punic period.

Although prudence advocates a certain caution when considering some of the dates obtained in the laboratory before 1986, we can be certain that, as a whole, the picture is coherent and the chronology quite a bit more ancient than that established by traditional methods of dating (Fig. 105). In the radiometric sequence for the Phoenician–Punic world in the Peninsula, several significant features stand out. For a start, it should be possible to place the beginnings of Phoenician colonization in the Malaga–Algorrobo region as early as the ninth century BC (a probability coefficient of 93% for Phoenicians settling in Morro between 894 and 835 BC), and at the beginning of the eighth century in the Vélez–Toscanos region. Secondly, the first trading contacts with some of the regions of the interior, like Acinipo, would have followed immediately after the first Phoenicians settled at Morro de Mezquitilla, while in other more distant regions (Cerro de la Mora, Peña Negra and Portugal) Phoenician trade would not have developed before 800 BC. Lastly, these datings highlight the continuity and duration of the indigenous 'orientalizing' phenomenon and, especially, the possible gap that exists between the Phoenician and the Punic along the Malaga coastline (Fig. 106).

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5 THE GREAT POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS: THE PALACE AND THE TEMPLE

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9 THE COLONIES OF THE FAR WEST: GADIR AND THE ATLANTIC METAL TRADE

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10 THE COLONIES IN THE WEST II: MEDITERRANEAN ANDALUSIA AND IBIZA

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Index

Abdera (Adra) 163, 167, 189, 307, 308, 310, 312, 315, 345
Adad-Ninari 90, 91
agriculture 43, 79, 80, 81, 94, 128, 228, 314, 315, 316, 328, 345, 346
Ahab of Israel 47, 86
Akhziv 16, 18, 35, 60, 65, 68, 69, 77, 85
Akkadian language 10, 22, 23, 82, 105, 121, 123, 145, 146, 147, 336
Akko (Acre) 16, 31, 58, 69, 77, 85, 94, 148
Alalakh 10, 29
Alexander the Great 12, 16, 31, 33, 35, 42, 60, 144, 155, 157, 181, 247
Almuñécar (Sexi) 163, 190, 202, 302, 305, 307, 308, 311, 312, 315, 327, 330, 333–7, 353
Amarna, El 10, 22, 23, 61, 98, 111, 117, 134, 144, 145
Andalusia, settlements in 2, 3, 4, 41, 88, 159, 163, 167, 182, 187, 192, 210, 212, 219, 235, 243, 257, 271, 279, 285, 288, 289, 292, 296, 297, 305, 308, 312, 316, 321, 326, 330, 332, 337, 339, 341, 343, 345, 346, 351, 352, 353
annals
  Assyrian 2, 27, 31, 49, 50, 55, 61, 66, 82, 87
  Carthaginian 214
  Tyrian 20, 28, 29, 147
Arvad (Aradus) 6, 16, 18, 30, 31, 37, 55, 57, 61, 64, 85, 90, 119, 123, 145, 179, 181, 182, 231
Asarhadon 95, 120, 205
  treaty with Baal 59, 117, 119, 146, 148
Assyria 2, 10, 17, 27, 30, 31, 35, 37, 44, 46, 49, 50, 51, 54, 55, 57–61, 66, 68, 70, 72, 79, 80–94, 96, 107, 108, 109, 110, 118, 122, 134, 135, 140, 142, 146, 166, 174, 176, 177, 178, 205, 210, 350
Astarte 35, 52, 68, 147, 148, 151, 152–6, 165, 216, 218, 235, 263, 267, 289
Asurbanipal 59, 84, 94, 120
Auza 46, 47, 72, 162, 163, 208

Baal
  god 35, 47, 52, 152, 153, 157, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 253, 269
  king of Tyre 59, 60, 114, 117, 119, 146, 148, 157
Babylon, Babylonia 23, 59, 60, 82, 93, 98, 101, 104, 105, 106, 118,

119, 120, 121, 122, 126, 134, 138, 140, 141, 143, 146, 147
Beqaa Valley 60, 75, 76, 85
Berytos (Beirut) 15, 16, 18, 27, 28, 60, 64, 65, 152, 246
Bithia 165, 241, 242
Byblos (Gubal, Gebal) 11, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30, 31, 44, 47, 64, 79, 81, 83, 90, 113–17, 119, 123, 135, 136, 144, 145–7, 149, 152, 166, 172, 175, 180, 199, 246, 287

Cadiz 33, 34, 70, 71, 72, 145, 156, 157, 159, 161, 162, 196, 197, 199, 203–8, 259, 260, 261, 262, 264, 265, 266, 267, 270, 273, 275, 276, 277, 286, 293, 301, 302, 304, 307, 308, 310, 328, 343, 344 (*see also under* Gadir)
Canaan, Canaanite 9–15, 23, 24, 25, 47, 148, 173, 201, 202
  Bronze Age 18, 21, 22, 40, 74, 81, 132, 134
  language 23–4
  literature 27
  religion 149, 151, 152, 154, 217, 246, 247, 276
  ships 173, 174, 178
Carambolo 209, 210, 273, 287, 289, 301
Carthage 4, 12, 29, 52, 70, 72, 95, 101, 159, 160, 162, 171, 179, 187, 191, 193, 200, 205, 212, 213, 214, 221, 226, 227, 244, 249, 255, 261, 309, 337, 343, 346, 347, 348, 351
  agriculture 229, 230
  archaeological record 218, 219, 224, 226, 228, 199
  coinage 141
  expansion 60
  foundation 51, 76, 88, 96, 157, 163, 208, 214–18, 224, 349
  religion 156, 158, 249, 250, 252, 332
  social stratification 117, 145–7, 155
Castillo de Doña Blanca 272, 286
Cerro del Villar, Guadalhorce 231, 308, 310, 312, 313, 315, 316, 321, 324, 328, 329, 345
Chorreras 41, 308, 309, 311, 312, 317, 321, 330, 337
Cilicia 7, 48, 49–51, 63, 71, 80, 82, 84, 87, 88, 92, 94, 123, 175, 205
commercial diaspora 25, 108, 279, 350, 351
Cyprus 2, 25, 36, 46, 50, 51, 52, 54, 57, 65, 72, 80, 81, 88, 93, 94, 111, 123, 126, 130, 134, 136, 137, 140, 147, 155, 156, 159, 173, 178, 186, 205, 207, 208, 211, 215–17, 228, 278, 321

demography 15, 23, 74, 76, 96, 201, 226, 253, 336, 343, 348, 352, 353
Dido *see under* Elissa

Ebla 11, 18, 20, 23, 315
Egypt 9, 10, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20–3, 29, 30, 31, 33, 35, 37, 43, 44, 50, 55, 59, 66, 74, 75, 77, 81, 83, 85, 86, 88, 92–4, 100, 111, 113, 114, 116, 118, 120, 123, 126, 130, 132, 134, 135, 146, 165, 168, 172, 173, 178, 186, 192, 202, 205, 209, 333, 334
Elissa (Dido) 51, 155, 156, 158, 163, 207, 215–18, 227, 230, 246, 249
equivalencies 82, 83, 103, 104, 109, 113, 133, 138, 141, 142, 278

Euboeans 129, 218, 226, 228, 238, 242, 243, 244
Ezekiel 26, 32, 34, 35, 37, 45, 59, 75, 80, 86, 93, 114, 116, 117, 119, 120–3, 126, 145, 148, 149, 154, 175, 205, 247

Flavius Josephus 26–8, 45, 177, 217
food shortage 75–7, 79, 85, 86, 95

Gadir (Gades, Gadeira) 156, 165, 195, 204–6, 212, 263, 301, 302, 305, 307, 312, 330, 344, 347, 350, 352, 353
  foundation 25, 153, 161–3, 198, 201, 209, 260–1, 279
  geography 181–3, 231, 262, 265, 266, 271, 345
  Herakleion 208, 259, 273, 275–8, 291, 313
  Herakles 195–7
  hippoi 174, 297
  shipping links 168, 171, 172, 184–6, 189, 190–3, 227, 337, 339, 341
  silver trade 283–5, 287
  trading circuits 257, 259, 273, 281, 289, 292, 304, 343, 346, 350
Gibraltar 159, 161, 163, 167, 171, 172, 182–7, 192–3, 197, 228, 260, 261, 297, 304, 310, 329, 336, 337
gift exchange 131, 132, 135, 136, 140
Gozo 165, 174, 233, 235
Greece 3, 6, 54, 63, 108, 123, 127, 128, 129, 132–4, 142, 170, 175, 196, 198, 205, 219, 260, 280, 281, 284, 321, 325

Hamilcar 249, 157, 158
Hercules/Herakles 273
  columns of 153, 163
  in Spain 197, 275
  temple of 196, 259, 261, 263, 278
  travels of 260
Hiram I 28, 29, 31, 33, 35, 40, 41, 43–6, 51, 71, 77, 78, 85, 126, 135, 145, 147, 152, 153, 175, 198, 201
  pact with Solomon 49, 76, 117, 143, 204, 277
  trade with Ophir 81, 86, 120, 125, 200
Hiram II 55, 147
Hittites 24, 49, 50, 51, 75, 81, 108
Homer 6, 7, 9, 10, 46, 47, 53, 100, 114, 127–30, 132, 133, 136, 139, 140, 143, 168, 176, 196, 198, 247, 248
Hŭelva 84, 95, 137, 203, 209, 210, 211, 261, 262, 278, 281 283, 285, 287, 289, 292, 328, 343, 344, 346, 355
human sacrifice 63, 151, 152, 218, 246–8, 250, 252–4, 276

Ibiza 59, 159, 167, 168, 186, 187, 191–3, 212, 226, 228, 257, 305, 310, 330, 337, 338, 339, 341, 343, 346, 351
Isaiah 10, 21, 26, 46, 59, 87, 92, 94, 117, 119, 120, 145, 153, 205
Israel 13, 23, 29, 27, 28, 44, 45–8, 58, 68, 69, 76, 77, 79, 81, 85, 86, 88, 93–5, 115, 117, 118, 121, 122, 125, 135, 146, 150, 151, 172, 246, 247
Ithobaal I (Ethbaal) 34, 46, 47, 50, 51, 60, 85, 89, 122, 145, 148, 155, 162, 178
ivories 44, 47, 48, 54, 55, 79, 80, 90–2, 124, 134, 137, 192, 201, 204, 287, 289, 292, 296, 301, 302, 341, 355

Jehosaphat of Judah 87, 115, 204
Jezebel 47
Josephus *see under* Flavius Josephus

Kamid el-Loz 23, 28
Kanesh 98, 108, 109, 110, 116, 139, 143, 320
Karatepe 49, 50, 87
karum 103–5, 106, 108, 109, 116, 125, 313, 349
Khaldé 41, 64, 65, 332
Kition 46, 51, 52, 54, 58, 59, 72, 88, 95, 96, 147, 155, 165, 186, 208, 216, 217, 234, 312

Lixus 70, 72, 156, 159, 161–3, 174, 191, 192, 194, 197, 206, 209, 235, 275, 297, 300, 301, 304, 330
Luli (Elulaios) 56, 58, 59, 94, 120, 145, 173, 175

Malaga (Malaka) 41, 163, 167, 187, 189, 190, 193, 229, 236, 257, 305, 307–13, 315, 316, 323, 325–30, 340, 345, 346, 352, 353, 355
Malta 156, 164, 174, 182, 187, 191, 193, 214, 234, 235, 244, 255, 278
markets 35, 44, 45, 47, 49, 51, 83, 89, 90, 93, 95, 96, 98, 100–6, 108, 110, 120, 123, 126, 127, 132, 138, 141–3, 210, 243, 276–9, 291, 314, 317, 320, 324, 347, 349
Mattan II 57, 93, 215
Megiddo 18, 21, 47, 48, 69, 270
Melqart (Hercules) 50, 144, 148, 149, 152, 154–6, 161, 189, 196, 197, 207, 215, 279, 285
  temple in Gadir 208, 261, 263, 264, 270, 273, 275, 277–9, 352
  temple in Tyre 20, 35, 39, 45, 150, 152, 153, 155, 157, 217, 276, 352
  worship 151, 246
metallurgy 24, 68, 186, 279, 283, 284, 316, 325, 347
Mogador 191, 235, 297, 301, 302, 304, 313, 330, 344
molk *see under* human sacrifice
Monte Sirai 240, 241, 254, 343
Morro de Mezquitilla 308, 311, 312, 315, 317, 330, 334, 345, 353
Motya 164, 181, 182, 186, 192, 214, 231–4, 250, 255, 312, 319, 349, 351, 352
Mycenae 22, 25, 75, 111, 173, 198, 202, 211
Myriandros 49, 85

Nebuchadnezzar 35, 71, 93, 119, 120, 121, 126, 227, 343, 346
Nimrud 48, 92
Nora 165, 206, 207, 208, 209, 241, 242, 255, 278, 301

Ophir 44, 81, 85, 86, 115, 117, 136, 205
orientalizing 1, 209, 210, 285, 291, 295, 329
over-population 73, 76, 77, 79

Panormo (Palermo) 164, 231, 234
Philistines 13, 24, 30, 43, 77, 78, 85
Philo of Byblos 11, 28, 166, 247
Phoenicia 118
  coinage 138, 141, 142
  relations with Assyria 55, 57, 58
Phoenician
  archaeology 2, 60
  cities 123
  craftsmen 47, 48

Phoenician (*cont.*)
diaspora 2, 30, 33, 52, 159, 161–5, 195, 196, 200–2, 208, 209, 211–14, 243, 244, 257
gift exchange 132–4, 136–8, 140
historiography 3, 4, 28, 194, 197–9
language 50, 119
monarchy 144–9, 155
origins 6–12
palaces 29, 118
ports 178–81
religion 149–54, 216, 217
ships and navigation 44, 156, 166–78, 182–93
Phoenician trade 118, 119, 120, 127–31
in luxury goods 54, 131,132, 137
in metals 45, 49
Phoinix 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 187, 279
phoinix, phoinikes 5–7, 9–12
Pitecusas 243, 244, 284, 321, 349
Polanyi 99–104, 106–10, 133, 138, 141, 348, 349
ports, ancient 33, 178
ports of trade 101, 102–3, 109, 348, 349
pre-colonization 194, 200–2, 209, 211
pre-coinage 138–40
pre-monetal circulation 82
prestige goods 48, 79, 137–40, 200, 289, 295
Punic 1, 12, 13
cities 219, 263, 339
harbours 219
necropolises 253, 266, 267, 345
phase/period 4, 213, 235, 242, 265, 305, 307, 315, 316, 321, 341, 343
settlements 167, 236
socio-cultural dynamic 231
wars 181, 229
purple industry 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14, 17, 40, 51, 55, 68, 90, 123, 125, 154, 155, 233, 314
Pygmalion (Pumayyaton) 51, 88, 153, 208, 215, 216, 217

Rio Tinto 84, 96, 205, 281, 284

sacrifice *see under* human sacrifice
Salammbô 179, 219, 221, 224, 226, 245, 249, 250, 252
Salmanasar III 49, 51, 55, 87, 90
Salmanasar V 58, 93, 120, 177
Samaria 47, 48, 85, 86, 307, 334, 336, 350
Sanchuniathon (Sakkunyaton) 28, 246
Sarepta 15, 18, 25, 60, 66, 67, 68, 146, 233, 287
Sargon II 37, 58, 82, 84, 88, 93, 120
Sea Peoples 23, 24, 30, 65, 74, 75
Sennacherib 37, 58, 59, 66, 77, 94, 120, 176
settlement patterns 167, 213, 231, 234, 235, 242, 244, 310, 316, 330, 341, 343, 345, 347, 355
shipping routes 160, 192, 193, 218, 284, 337
Sidon 9, 10, 16, 18, 21, 27, 29, 31, 58, 118, 123, 128, 129, 130, 132, 140, 161, 165, 334
necropolises 66, 144
relationship to Tyre 31, 44–6, 51, 52, 59, 65, 77, 90, 92–4, 119, 120
religion 147, 152, 155
seafaring 159, 172, 175, 179, 181
silver 90, 339, 340
exchange values 80–4, 94, 103, 104, 105, 110, 138–43
as prestige objects 130, 131, 135–7
production 79, 87, 201, 245, 257,

279, 280, 281, 284, 285, 315, 340, 344, 345, 355
in tombs 54, 292
trade 18, 44, 51, 73, 76, 82, 88, 92, 95, 96, 107, 159, 177, 204, 257, 278, 281, 283, 287, 290, 295, 310, 342, 343
tribute 55, 80, 91,108
Solomon 28, 44–7, 49, 76–9, 86, 115, 117, 118, 123, 135, 143, 200, 204, 277
Solunto 164, 231, 234
suffetes 117, 145–7, 157
Sulcis 165, 214, 237, 238, 240–4, 254, 255, 308, 309, 313, 351
Syria-Palestine 7, 11, 13, 18, 21–5, 44, 47, 49, 50, 51, 61, 63–5, 71, 74, 79, 81, 85, 87, 88, 90, 91, 93, 94, 111, 113, 125, 183, 247, 248, 276, 332

tamkarum 105–7, 109, 110, 126
Tanit 68, 152, 157, 223, 250, 252, 343
Tarshish 45, 120, 124, 126, 204, 205
ships of 44, 120, 175, 204, 205
Tell Abu-Hawam 60, 68–70, 77, 78
Tell Arqa 61, 332
Tell Kazel 61
Tell Keisan 68, 69, 77, 78, 85, 308
Tell Sukas 63, 179, 244
Tharros 165, 236, 241–3, 252, 253, 255
Tiglatpileser I 30
Tiglatpileser III 50, 55, 57, 88, 92, 93, 118
tophet 63, 64, 218, 219, 221, 224, 226, 227, 230, 233, 234, 237, 240–6, 248, 250, 252–5, 355
Toscanos 41, 305, 309, 311–13, 315–17, 319, 321, 327, 329, 330, 333, 335, 337, 345, 352, 353
Trayamar 230, 304, 305, 330, 333–7, 353
treaty trade 100, 102, 104, 109
tributes 22, 27, 30, 51, 55–7, 72, 79, 80, 83, 87, 89–92, 94, 100, 111, 113, 122, 134, 139, 157, 217, 229, 230, 255
Tyre 18, 20, 21
annals 26–8, 215
Assyrian relations 53, 55–9, 89–95
coinage 7, 141
diaspora 2, 25, 26, 30 , 51, 52, 70, 71, 164, 165, 347–55
and Egypt 22, 86, *see also* Wen-Amon
excavations 39–43
foodstuffs 75–9
foundation and growth 29–31
and Israel 26, 47, 86, *see also* Solomon
monarchy 23, 23, 46, 116–17, 119, 144–50
ports 178–84
and the sea 46, 85, 159, *see also* shipping routes
ships 172–7
silver 280, 284, 285, *see also under* silver
temple 35, 150–8, *see also* Melqart
territory 10, 16–18, 31, 33–7, 48–50
Toscanos, links 330
trade 22, 31, 44, 48, 50, 54, 72, 79–88, 135
long distance 95–9, 113–16
See also Ezekiel; Isaiah; *and* Phoenicia/Phoenician

Ugarit 9, 10, 21–5, 28, 29, 66, 75, 79, 81–3, 98, 101–3, 106, 107, 109, 111, 114, 116, 117, 139,

Ugarit (*cont.*)
143, 149, 151, 154, 174, 178, 199, 202, 246, 336
Ushu (Palaeotyre) 23, 34, 35, 40, 43, 58, 85, 144, 312
Utica 70, 72, 156, 159, 161–3, 185, 187, 192, 194, 197, 198, 201, 206, 216, 218, 228, 230, 231, 255

voyages 45, 113, 115, 128, 169, 177, 185, 186, 191, 196, 197, 204, 205, 234, 261, 279, 301
duration of 168, 171–5

Wen-Amon 29, 30, 31, 32, 83, 113–16, 119, 135, 145, 146, 175

Zakarbaal (Acherbas) 31, 114, 116, 117, 135, 136, 146, 157, 163, 215, 217
(Sicherbas) 114

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Between the ninth and sixth centuries BC, the Phoenicians established the first trading system to encompass the entire length of the Mediterranean basin, from their homeland, in what is now Lebanon, to colonies in Cyprus, Tunisia, Sicily, Sardinia and southern Spain. The Phoenician state was able to maintain its independence, despite the territorial expansion of the Assyrians, in return for tribute provided by its western colonies. Archaeological research over the past decades has changed our understanding of these colonies and their relationship to local Iron Age communities.

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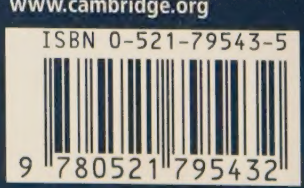
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